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IN THE FIELDS.

BY J. J. B.

Look at those young green ears of wheat,
How haughtily they stand
With heads uplifted in the air
Like lords of all the land!
And listen while before the breeze:
Their pride a moment yields,
Their little sighs of discontent
Are heard all down the fields.

But when their green has changed to gold,
And their chaff is filled with wheat,
Their heads will be as humbly bowed
As the harebells at their feet.
And thus it is in life's wheat-field,
'Tis only in half empty heads
There can be room for pride.

FOR LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NULL AND VOID," "MADAM'S WARD," "THE HOUSE IN THE CLOSE," "WHITE BERRIES AND RED," "ONLY ONE LOVE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

FLORENCE LEPEL raised her beautiful eyes at last to her brother's face.

"I only repeat what you yourself have said. There is no way out of it—for you."

Her voice was quite even and expressionless, but Hubert's face contracted at the sound of her words as if they hurt him. He raised his cigar mechanically to his lips found that it had gone out, and, instead of relighting it, threw it away angrily from amongst the flowers. His sister, her eyes keen notwithstanding the velvety softness of their glance, saw that his hands trembled as he did so.

"I should like to have some conversation with you," he said, in a tone that betokened irritation, "if you can spare a little time from your duties."

"They are not particularly engrossing just now," said Miss Lepel evenly, indicating the book that lay upon her lap. "I am improving my mind by the study of French language," she said. "The General knows nothing of French authors since the days of Racine, and will think me quite laudably employed in reading a modern French novel."

"The General is not likely to find you anywhere to-day, nor for many a day to come."

"Is he dead?" asked his sister, ruffling the pages of her book. She did not look as if anybody's death could disturb her perfect equanimity.

"Are you a fiend, Florence," Hubert burst out angrily, "that you can speak in that manner of a man who has been so great a benefactor, so kind a friend, to both of us? Have you no heart at all?"

"I am not sure. If ever I had one, I think that it was killed—three months ago."

Her voice sank to a whisper as she uttered the last few words. Her breath came a little faster for a second or two—then she was calm again. Her brother looked at her with an air of stupefaction.

"How dare you allude to that shameful episode in your life," he said sternly, "and to me of all people!"

"If not to you, I should certainly speak of it to no one," she answered quietly. There was a sudden blaze of light in the red-brown eyes beneath the heavily-veined eyelids. "You are my only safety-valve; I must speak sometimes—or die. Besides" —in a still lower tone—"I see nothing shameful about it. We have done no harm. If he loved me better than he loved his chattering commonplace little wife, I was not to blame. How could I help it if I loved him too? It was kismet—it had to be. You should have interfered."

"And pray what would have happened if I had interfered? What shame, what ruin, what disgrace!"

"It is useless for you to rant and rave in that manner," said Florence Lepel, letting her eyes drop once more on the open pages of her French novel. "You did interfere, and there is an end of it. And what an end! You must be proud of your work. He dead, Marion dying, the General nearly mad with grief, the man Westwood hanged for a crime he never committed!"

"Westwood has been reprieved," said Hubert sharply.

"What a relief to you!" commented his sister, with almost incredible coolness.

He turned away from her, catching at his throat as if something rose to choke him there. His face was very pale; the lines of pain about his eyes and mouth were plainer and deeper than they had been before. Florence glanced up at him and smiled faintly. There was a strange malignity in her smile.

"You can tell me," she said, when the silence had lasted for some minutes, "what you meant by saying that the General would not find me here to-day."

"He has narrowly escaped a fit of apoplexy. He is to be kept quiet; he will not be able to see anyone for some days to come."

"Oh! What brought it on?"

The news," answered Hubert reluctantly, "of Westwood's reprieve."

Miss Lepel smiled again.

"Was he very angry?" she said. "Ah, he would do anything in his power to bring his brother's murderer to justice—I have heard him say so a hundred times! You ought to be very, very grateful to me Hubert, for remembering that you are my brother."

"I wish to Heaven I were not!" cried the young man.

"For some things I wish you were not too," said Florence slowly. She sat up, clasped her white hands round her knees, and looked at him reflectively. "If you had not been my brother, I suppose you would not have interfered," she went on. "You would have left me to pursue my wicked devices, and simply turned your back on me and Sydney Vane. I agree with you. I wish to Heaven—if you like that form of expression—that you were not my brother, Hubert Lepel! You have made the misery of my life."

"And you the disgrace of mine!" he said bitterly.

"Then we are quits," she answered, in the listless, passionless voice that she seemed especially to affect. "We need not reproach each other for the past; but for the future let me at least be certain that my sacrifice will avail to keep you in a right path, that you will not again—not again ——."

"This is very edifying," said Florence quietly, as the young man broke off short in his speech and turned away with a despairing stamp of the foot—his sister's face would have discomfited a man of far greater moral courage than poor Hubert Lepel—"it is something new for me to be lectured by my younger brother, whose course has surely not been quite irreproachable, I should imagine! Come, Hubert—do not be absurd! You have acted according to your lights, as the old women say, and I according to mine. There is nothing more for us to talk about. Let us quit the subject; the past is dead."

"I tell you it is the future that I concern myself about. Upon my honor, Florence, I did not know that you were here when I came down to-day! I thought that you had gone to your friend Mrs. Bartolet at Worcester, as you said to me that you would when I saw you last. Why have you not gone? You said that life here was now intolerable to you. I remember your very words, although I have not been here for weeks."

"Your memory does you credit," said the girl, with slow scorn.

"Why have you stayed?"

"For my own ends—not yours."

"So I suppose."

"My dear brother Hubert," said Florence, composing herself in a graceful attitude in the depths of her basket-chair, "can you not be persuaded to go your own way and leave me to go mine? You have done a good deal of mischief already, don't you know? You have ruined my prospects, destroyed my hopes—if I were sentimental, I might say, broken my heart! Is not that enough for you? For mercy's sake, go your own way henceforward, and let me do as I please!"

"But what is your way? What do you please?"

"Is it well for me to tell you after the warning I have had?"

"If you had a worthy plan, an honorable ambition, you could easily tell me. Again I ask, Why are you here?"

"Yes, why?" repeated Florence, her lips curling and, for the first time, a slight color flushing her pale cheeks. "Why? Your dull wits will not even compass that, will they? Well, partly because I am a thoroughly worldly woman, or rather a woman of the world—because it is not well to give up a good home, a luxurious life, and a large salary, when they are to be had for the asking—because, as Enid Vane's governess, I can have as much freedom and as little work as I choose. Is not that answer enough for you?"

"No," said Hubert doggedly, "it is not by any means."

She shrugged her graceful shoulders.

"It should be, I think. But I will go on. I look three-and-twenty, but you know as well as I do that I am twenty-nine. In another year I shall be thirty—horrible thought! An attack of illness, even a little more trouble, such as this that I have lately undergone, will make me look my full age. Do you know what that means to a woman?" She pressed her eyelids and the hollows beneath her eyes with her fingers. "When I look in the glass, I see already what I shall be when I am forty. I must make the best of my youth and of my good looks. You spoiled one chance in life for me; I must make what I can of the other."

"You mean," said the young man, with white dry lips, which he vainly attempted to moisten as he spoke—"you mean—that you must make what the world calls a good marriage?"

She bowed her head.

"At last you have grasped my meaning" she said coldly; "you have hitherto been exceedingly slow to do so."

He looked at her silently for a moment or two, almost with abhorrence. Her fair and delicate beauty affected him with a sort of loathing; he could not believe that this woman with the cold lips and malignant eyes had been born of his mother, had played with him in childhood, had kissed him with loving kisses and spoken to him in sisterly loving fashion.

It took him some time to conquer the terrible hatred that grew up with him towards her as he remembered all that she had been and all that she had done; but, when at last he was able to speak, his voice was calm and studiously gentle.

"Florence," he said, "I will not forget that you are my sister. You bear my name, you come of my race, and, whatever you do and whatever you are I cannot desert you. I promised our mother on her death bed that I would care for you as long as you needed care; and, if ever you needed it in your life, you need it now! I have not done my duty to you during the past few weeks. I have left you to yourself, and thought I could never forgive you for what you had done. But now I see that I was wrong. If it would be of any service to you, I would make a home for you at once —I would place all my means at your disposal. Come back with me to London, and let us make a home for ourselves together. We are both weary, both have suffered; could we not try to console and strengthen each other?"

The wistfulness of his tone, of his looks, would have softened any heart that was not as hard as stone. But Florence Lepel's pale face was utterly unmoved.

"You offer me a brilliant lot," she said —"to live in a garret, I suppose, and darn your stockings, while you earn a paltry pittance as a literary man, eked out by aunt Leo's charity! You know very well sooner than do that I put up for two years with Marion Vane's patronage and the drudgery of the schoolroom! And now, when the woman who alternately scolded and cajoled me, the woman who once took it upon her to lecture me for my behavior to her husband, the woman whom I hated as I should hate a poisonous snake—when the woman is slowly dying and leaving the field to me, am I to throw up the game, give up my chances, and go to vegetate with you in London? You know me very little if you think I would do that."

"I seem to have known you very little all my life," said Hubert bitterly. "I certainly do not understand you now. What can you get by staying here?"

"Oh, nothing, of course!" she answered tranquilly.

"What is your scheme, Florence?"

"It is of no use telling you—you might interfere again."

The anguish of doubt and anxiety in his dark eyes, if she had looked at him, would surely have moved her. But she did not look.

"I mean to stay here," she said quietly, "teaching Enid Vane, putting up with aunt Leonora's impertinences as well as I can, until I get another chance in the world. What that chance may be of course I cannot tell, but I am certain that it will come."

"You can bear to stay in this house which I—I—infinitely less blame worthy than yourself—can hardly endure to enter?"

"The world would not call you less blameworthy. I am glad that you are so far on good terms with your conscience."

"Florence," he said, almost threateningly, "take care! I will not spare you another time. If I find you involved in any other transaction of which you ought to be ashamed, I will expose you. I will tell the world the truth—that you were on the point of leaving England with Sydney Vane when I—when I——"

"When you shot him," she said, without a trace of emotion manifest in either face or voice, "and let Andrew Westwood stand the blame."

The young man winced as if he had received a blow.

"It was to shield you that I kept silence," he said, passionate agitation showing itself in his manner. "It was to save your good name. But even for your sake I would not have let the man suffer death. If we had obtained no reprieve for him, I swear that I would have given myself up and borne the punishment!"

"You were at work then? You tried to get the reprieve for him?" said his sister with the faintest possible touch of eagerness.

"I did indeed." Hubert's voice fell into a lower key, as if he were trying, miserably enough, to justify to himself, rather

than to her, what he had done. "It would be almost useless to confess my own guilt. It would be thought that I was beside myself. Who would believe me—unless you—you yourself corroborated my story? The man Westwood was a poacher, a thief, wretchedly poor in health; he has no character to lose, no friends to consider. Besides, he was morally guiltier than I. I know that he was lying in wait for Vane; I know that he had resolved to be revenged on him. Now I—I have met my enemy in fair fight; I did not lie in ambush for him."

But from the darkness of his countenance it was plain that the young man's conscience was not deceived by the specious plea that he had set up for himself.

Beneath her drooping eyelids Florence watched him narrowly. She read him in his weakness, his bitterness of spirit, more clearly than he could read himself. Suddenly she sat up and leaned forward so that she could touch him with one of her soft cold hands—her hands were always cold.

"Hubert," she said, with a gentle inflection of her voice which took him by surprise, "I am perhaps not as bad as you think me, dear. I do not want to quarrel with you—you are my only friend. You have saved me from worse than death. I will not be ungrateful. I will do exactly as you wish."

He looked bewildered, almost dismayed at her.

"Do you mean it, Florence?" he asked doubtingly.

"I do indeed. And, in return, oh, Hubert will you set my mind at rest by promising me one thing? You will give me another chance to retrieve my wasted, ruined life, will you not? You will never tell to another what you and I know alone? You will still shield me—from—from—disgrace, Hubert—for our mother's sake?"

The tears trembled on her lashes; she slipped down from her low chair and knelt by his side, clasping her hands over his half-reluctant fingers, appealing to him with voice and look alike; and, in an evil hour for himself, he promised at any cost to shield her from the consequences of her folly and sin.

CHAPTER V.

"OH, YOU TWO are here together!" There was a great note of surprise in Miss Vane's voice as she turned the corner of a great group of foliage-plants and came upon brother and sister at the open library window. "I could not tell what had become of either of you. If you have finished your conversation"—with a sharp glance from Florence's wet eyelashes to Hubert's pale agitated face—"I have work for both of you. Florence, Enid has been alone all the morning; do take the child for a walk and let her have a little fresh air! And I want you to go for a stroll with me, Hubert; the General is sleeping quietly, and I have two or three things to consult you about before I go up to Marion."

The sudden gleam in Florence's eyes, quickly as it was concealed, did not escape Miss Leonora's notice as she moved slowly away.

"What's the matter with Flossy?" she asked abruptly, stopping to throw over her head a black-lace scarf which she had been carrying on her arm. "She has been crying."

"She feels the trouble that has come upon us all, I suppose," said Hubert rather awkwardly. He pressed forward a little, so as to hold open the conservatory door for his aunt. He was glad of the opportunity of averting his face for a moment from the scrutiny of her keen eyes.

"That is not all," said Miss Vane, as she quitted the great glass-house, with its wealth of bloom and perfume, for the freshness of the outer air. She struck straight across the sunny lawn, leaving the house behind. "That is not all. Come away from the house—I don't want what I have to say to you to be overheard, and walls have ears sometimes. Your sister Florence, Hubert, was never remarkable for a very feeling heart. She is, and always was, the most unsympathetic person I ever knew."

"She has perhaps greater depth of feeling that we give her credit for," said Hubert, thinking of certain words that had been said, of certain scenes on which his eyes rested in by-gone days.

"Not she—excuse me! Hubert, I know that she is your sister, and that men do not like to hear their sisters spoken against; but I must remind you that Florence lived ten years under my roof, and that a woman is more likely to understand a girl's nature than a young man."

"I never pretended to understand Florence," said Hubert helplessly; "she got beyond me long ago."

"She is a good deal older than you, my dear, and she has had more experiences than she would like to have known. How do I know? I only guess, but I am certain of what I say. She is nine-and twenty, and she has been out in the world for the last eight years. There is no telling what she may not have gone through in that space of time."

Hubert was dumb—it was not in his power just then to contradict his aunt's assertions.

"I would gladly have kept her under the shelter of my roof," said Miss Vane, pursuing the tenor of her thoughts without much reference to her listener's condition of mind; "but you know as well as I do that she refused to live with me after she was twenty-one—would be a governess. Ugh! Wonder how she liked it?"

"She seemed to like it very well; she stayed four years in Russia."

"Yes, and hoped to get married there, but failed. I know Flossy. She must have mismanaged matters frightfully, for she is an attractive girl. She went to Scotland then for a year or two, you know, and was engaged for a time to that young Scotch laird—I never heard why the engagement was broken off."

"Why are you so deep in these reminiscences, aunt Leonora?" asked Hubert, with an uneasiness which he tried to conceal by a nervous little laugh. "I should have thought you would be absorbed in anxiety for the General; and, as for me, I want to know what the doctor says about the dear old boy."

"I am absorbed in anxiety for him," said Miss Vane decisively; "and that is just why I am calling these little details of Florence's history to your mind. As to the General's health, the doctor says that we may be easier about it now than we have been for many a day. The crisis that we have been expecting has come and passed, and we may be thankful that he is no worse. If he keeps quiet, he will be about again in a few days, and may not have another attack for years."

"And Marion?"

"Ah, poor Marion! She is not long for this world, Hubert. I must be back with her at twelve. Till then the nurse has possession and I am free. Poor soul! It is a dark ending to what seemed a bright enough life. Her mind has failed of late as much as her body."

Hubert could not reply.

"Sit down here," said Miss Vane, as they reached a rustic seat beneath a great copper-beech tree on the farther side of the lawn. "Here we can see the house and be seen from it; if they want me, they will know where to find me. I am not speaking at random, Hubert; there is a thing that I want to say to you about your sister Florence."

Hubert seated himself at her side with a thrill of positive fear. Had she some accusation to bring against his sister? He was miserably conscious that he was quite unprepared to defend her against any accusation whatsoever.

"What I mean first of all to say," Miss Vane proceeded, looking straight before her at the house, "is that Florence is a girl of an unusual character. She looks very mild and meek, but she is not mild and meek at all. Most girls are, on the whole, affectionate and well-principled and timid; Flossy is not one of the three!"

"You are surely hard on her!"

"No, I am not. Long ago I made up my mind that she wanted to get married; that is nothing—every girl of her disposition wants more or less to be married. But I came across a piece of information the other day which made me feel almost glad that poor Sydney's life ended as it did. There was danger ahead."

"It is all done with now," said Hubert hurriedly; "why should you rake up the past? Cannot it be left alone?"

He was sitting with his elbows on his knees, his chin supported by his hands, a look of settled gloom upon his face. Miss Vane's eyes flashed.

"You know what I mean then?" she said sharply.

Hubert started into an upright position, crossed his arms, and looked her imperturbably in the face.

"I have not the slightest idea of what you are going to say."

"You know something nevertheless," said Miss Vane, with equal composure. "Well, I don't ask you to betray your sister. I only wish to mention that, in looking over my brother Sydney's papers the other day, I came across a letter from Florence which I consider extremely compromising. It was written from Scotland while she was still engaged to that young laird, but it showed plainly that some sort of understanding subsisted between her and Sydney Vane. They must have met several times without the knowledge of any member of our family; and it seems that she proffered her services to Marion as Enid's governess at his instigation. What do you think of that?"

"I think," said Hubert deliberately, "that Florence has always proved herself something of a plotter, and that the letter shows that she was scheming to get a good situation. You can't possibly make anything more out of it, aunt Leonora"—with a stormy glance. "I think you had better not try."

Miss Vane sat for a moment or two in deep meditation.

"Well," she said at length, "that may be true, and I may be an old fool. Perhaps I ought not to betray the girl to her brother either; but——"

"Oh, say the worst and get it over, by all means!" said Hubert desperately. "Out with your accusations, if you have any to make!"

Leonora Vane studied his face for a minute or two before replying. She did not like the withered paleness about his mouth, the look of suffering that was so evident in his haggard eyes.

"It is hardly an accusation, Hubert," she said with sudden gentleness. "I mean that I believe that she was in love—as far as a girl of her disposition can be in love—with my brother Sydney. I need not tell you how I have come to think so. In the first hours of our great loss she betrayed herself. To me only—you need not be afraid that she would ever wear her heart upon her sleeve, but to me she did betray her secret. Whether Sydney returned her affection or not I am not quite sure—for his wife's sake, I hope not."

Again she looked keenly at her young kinsman; but he, with his eyes fixed on the ground and his lips compressed, did not seem disposed to make any remark on what she had said.

"I felt sorry for the girl," Miss Vane went on, "although I despised her weakness in yielding to an affection for a married man. Still I thought her folly had brought its own punishment, and that I ought not to be hard upon her. Otherwise I should have recommended her to leave Sydney's daughter alone, and get a situation in another house. I wish I had. I cannot express too strongly to you, Hubert, how much I now wish I had!"

"Why?"

"I misunderstood her," said his cousin slowly. "I thought that she had a heart, and that she was grieving—innocently perhaps—over Sydney's death."

"Well, was she not?"

"I don't think so. If she ever cared for him at all, it was because she wanted the ease and luxury that he could give her. For, if she cared for him, Hubert—I put it to you as a matter of probability—could she immediately after his death begin to plan a marriage with somebody else?"

Hubert looked up at last, with a startled expression upon his face.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, my dear boy, that your sister Florence now wants to marry the old General."

In spite of his distress of mind, Hubert could not stifle a short laugh.

"Aunt Leonora, you are romancing! This is really too much!"

"I should not mention it to you if I had not good reason," said Miss Vane, with a series of mysterious nods. "I have sharp eyes, Hubert, and can see as far as most people. I repeat it—Florence wants to marry the General."

"She will not do that."

"I am not sure—if she is left here when I am gone. I must go back to London at some time or other, I suppose. But it won't do to leave Florence in possession of the house."

"She would not think of staying, surely, if——"

"If poor Marion died? Yes, she would. Believe me, I know what I am saying. I have watched her manner to him for the last few weeks, and I feel sure of it. She has her own ends in view."

"I have no doubt of that," said Hubert, rather bitterly. "But what are we to do?"

"Let our wits work against hers," replied Miss Vane briskly. "If poor Marion dies, we must suggest to the General that Enid should go to school. In that way we may get Florence out of the house without a scene. But—mark my words, Hubert—she will not go until she is forced. She is my second cousin once removed and your sister, but for all that she is a scheming unprincipled intriguer and adventuress who has never brought and never will bring good to any house in which she lives. You may try to get her away to London if you like, but you'll never succeed."

"I have tried already; I thought she would be better with me," said Hubert. "But it was of no use."

"You offered her a home? You are a good fellow, Hubert! You have always been a good brother to Florence, and I honor you for it," said Miss Vane heartily.

"Don't say so, aunt Leo; I'm not worth it," said the young man, starting up and walking two or three paces from her, then returned to her side. "I only wish that I could do more for her—poor Florence!"

"Poor Florence indeed!" echoed Miss Vane, with tart significance. "But I must go, Hubert. See her again, and persuade her, if you can, to leave Beechfield. Don't tell her what I have said to you. She is suspicious already, and will want to know. Did you notice the look she gave me when I said that I wished to talk to you? Be on your guard."

"I shall not have time to talk with her much. I must go back to London by the four o'clock train."

"Must you? Well, do your best. See—the blind is drawn up in Marion's dressing-room—a sign that I am wanted;" and Miss Vane turned towards the house.

Hubert's anticipations were verified. Florence was not to be persuaded by anything that he could say.

And, when he begged her to tell him why she wanted so much to stay at Beechfield, and hinted at the reason that existed in Miss Leonora's mind, Florence only laughed him to scorn.

He was obliged sorrowfully to confess to Miss Vane, when she walked with him that afternoon before he set out for London, that he had obtained no information concerning Flossy's plans, and that he could hope to have no influence over her movements.

He had five minutes to spare, and was urging her to walk with him a little way along the road that led to the nearest railway-station, when Miss Vane's attention was arrested by two little figures in the middle of the road. She stopped short, and pointed to them with her parasol.

"Hubert," she cried, in a voice that was hoarse with dismay, "do you see that?"

"I see Enid," said Hubert rather wonderingly. "I suppose she ought not to be here alone; she must have escaped from Florence. Why are you so alarmed? She is talking to a beggar-child—that is all."

Miss Vane pressed his arm with her hand.

"Are you blind?" she said. "Do you know to whom she is talking? Can you bear to see it?"

"Upon my soul, aunt Leo," said the young man, "I don't know what you are meaning!"

He looked at the scene before him. The white country road stretched in an undulating line right and left, its smooth surface mottled with patches of sunlight and tracts of refreshing shade. A broad margin of grass on either side, tall hedges of hawthorn and hazel, soothed the eye that might be wearied with the glare and whiteness of the road. On one of these grassy margins two children were standing face to face. Hubert recognized his little cousin Enid Vane, but the other—a sunburnt, gipsy-looking creature, with unkept hair and ragged clothes—who could she be?

"You were at the trial," Miss Vane whispered to him, in dismayed, reproachful tones. "Do you not know her? It is no fault of hers, poor child, of course; and yet it does give me a shock to see poor little Enid talking in that friendly way with the daughter of her father's murderer."

For the child was no other than little Jenny Westwood, whom Hubert had seen for a few minutes only at her father's trial three weeks before.

CHAPTER VI.

HUBERT stopped short. If Miss Vane had been looking at him, she would have seen that his face flushed deeply and then turned very pale. But she herself, with her gold eye-glasses fixed very firmly on the bridge of her high nose, was concentrating her whole attention upon the children.

"Enid," she called out rather sharply, "what are you doing there? Come to me."

Enid returned to her aunt. She was a singularly sensitive-looking child, with clear face and lips that paled too rapidly and veins that showed with almost painful distinctness beneath the soft white skin. Her features were delicately cut and gave promise of future beauty, when health should lend its vivifying touch to the white little face. Her eyes, of a tender violet-gray, were even now remarkable, and her hair was of rippling gold.

Her sombre black dress and the sunshine

that poured down upon the spot where she was standing contributed to the dazzling effect produced by her golden hair and white skin. There could not have been a greater contrast than that between her and Andrew Westwood's daughter, upon whom at that moment Hubert Lepel's eyes were fixed.

Jenny Westwood, as she was generally called, although her father gave her a different name, was thinner, browner, wilder-looking, than she had even been before. Miss Vane knew her by sight, but she imagined that the child had been taken away from the village by friends or sent to the work-house by the authorities. It was a shock to her to find the little creature at the park gates of Beechfield Hall.

Enid did not seem to be embarrassed by her aunt's call. She ran up to her at once, dragging the ragged child with her by the hand. Her pretty face was anxious and puzzled.

"Oh, aunt Leo," she said, "this little girl has nowhere to go to—no home—no anything!"

"Let her hand go, Enid!" said aunt Leo, with some severity. "You have no business to be out here in the road, talking to children whom you know nothing about."

Enid shrank a little, but did not drop the child's hand.

"But, aunt Leo, she is hungry and——"

"Were you begging of this young lady?" Miss Vane said magisterially, her eyes bent full on the ragged girl's dark face.

But Andrew Westwood's daughter would not speak.

"I'll talk to her," said Hubert, in a low tone. "You take Enid back to the house, aunt Leo, and I'll send the child about her business."

"No, no; you'll miss your train. It is time for you to go. Enid can run back to the house by herself. Go, Enid!"

"Why may I not speak to the little girl too?" said Enid wistfully.

It was not often that she was rebellious, but her face worked now as if she were going to cry.

"Never mind why—do as I tell you!" cried Miss Vane, who was growing exasperated by the pain and difficulty of the situation. "I will see what she wants."

Enid hesitated for a moment or so, and then flung herself impetuously upon Hubert.

"Won't you help her?" she said, looking up into his face with sweet entreaty. "I am sure you will be kind. The poor girl has had nothing to eat all day—I asked her. You will be kind to her, for you are always kind."

Hubert pressed her to him without speaking for a moment, then answered gently—

"Both your aunt and I will be kind to her and help her, Enid—you may be sure of that. Now run away home and leave us; we will do all we can."

For the first time the little outcast who had excited Enid's pity, broke the silence.

"I don't want nothing; I wasn't begging, nor meaning to beg. She found me asleep by the road and asked me if I was hungry—that was all.

"And she is hungry," said Enid, with passion, "and you don't want me to help her. You are unkind! Here, little girl—here is my shilling; it's the only one I've got, and it has a hole in it, but you may have it, and then you can get yourself something to eat in the village."

She dashed forward with the coin, eluding a movement of Miss Vane's hand designed to stop her in her course. The shilling lay in Jenny Westwood's grimy little hand before the lady could interfere.

"Don't take it away," Hubert whispered in his aunt's ear; "it will only make her remember the scene for a longer time."

"I know," Miss Vane answered grimly; and she stood still.

Enid turned sorrowfully, half ashamed of her momentary rebellion, towards the park gate. The other child seemed dazed by the excitement of the speakers, and only half understood what had been going on. She stood looking first at the coin in her hand and then at the donor, with a strange questioning expression on her little brown face. Miss Vane and Hubert also waited in silence, until Enid was out of hearing. Then, as if by the same instinct, each drew a long breath and looked doubtfully at the other and then at the child.

"You will miss your train; said Miss Leonora.

"I have done that already; so we may as well find out what brings the girl here. Why not take her inside the park gates? If any one passes by——"

"You are right, Hubert, as usual. Come here, child—come inside for a minute or two; I want to speak to you."

The little girl glanced doubtfully at Miss Vane's handsome imperious face. She seemed inclined to break away from her questioners and run down the road; but a look from under the long lashes at Hubert seemed to reassure her..

The young man's face had certainly an attractive quality—there was some sort of passion and pain in it, some mark of a great struggle which had not been all ignoble even if he had failed to win the victory, a look which worked its way into the hearts of many who would have refused their hands to him in sign of fellowship if they had known the whole story of his life.

This subtle charm had its influence on little Jennie Westwood, although she had no suspicion of its cause. She moved a little closer to him, and followed him inside the iron gates of Beechfield Park.

The great trees flung their shade over the broad drive which ran between mossy banks before the house was reached. Between their trunks the sunshine flickered on sheets of bracken, already turning a little yellow from the heat; the straight spikes of the foxglove, not yet in bloom, were visible here and there amongst the undulating forms of the woodland fern.

Hubert closed the gates carefully behind him, and stood with his aunt so as to screen the child from observation, should friends or acquaintances pass by.

He had a keen perception of the fact that Miss Vane was making an enormous effort over pride and prejudice and affectionate prepossessions of all kinds in even speaking a word to Andrew Westwood's little child.

He himself, in the depths of his soul, was stirred by a wild rush of pity and remorse, of sharp unaffected desire to undo what had been done already, to amend the injury that his hand had wrought—a far greater injury indeed than he had dreamt of doing.

He had always fancied Andrew Westwood as lonely a man as—in the world's eyes—he was worthless; he had not known until the day of the trial that the prisoner had a child.

"Your name is 'Westwood,' I think?" Miss Vane began stonily.

Hubert was keenly aware of the harshness of her tones.

The girl nodded.

"Your father is Andrew Westwood?"

She nodded again, a dull red creeping into her brown cheeks.

"What are you doing here?" There was a tragic intensity of indignation in Miss Vane's way of putting the question which Hubert wondered whether the child could comprehend. "You ought to be far away from Beechfield—it is the last place to which you should come!"

The child lowered her face until it was nearly hidden on her breast, and spoke for the second time.

"Hadn't nowhere to go," she muttered.

"Have you no home?" said Miss Vane sternly.

"Only the cottage down by the pond where my father lived. It is all shut up now."

"Where have you lived for the last few weeks? I head that you were in the workhouse."

"Yes." Then evidently with difficulty—"I ran away."

"Then you were a bad wicked girl to do so," said Miss Vane, with severity; "and you ought to be sent back again—and well whipped into the bargain."

Hubert made an impatient movement. He had never seen his aunt so much to her disadvantage. She was harsh, unwomanly, inhuman. Was it in this way that every woman would treat the poor child, remembering the story of her father's crime?

Miss Vane read the accusation in his eyes. She turned aside with an abrupt gesture, half of defiance, half of despair.

"I can't help it, Hubert," she said in an undertone. She raised her handkerchief to her eyes and dashed away a tear. "I feel it a wrong to Sydney, to Marion, to the child, that I should try to benefit any of Westwood's family. I can't bear to speak of her—I can't bear her in my sight. It makes me ill to see her."

She covered her eyes with her hand, so that she might not see the ragged miserable looking little creature any longer.

"It would make matters no better if the child were to die of neglect and starvation at your gates, would it?" said Hubert bitterly. "She must be got out of Beechfield, at any rate: you will never be able to bear seeing her about the roads—even amongst the workhouse children."

"No, no, indeed! And Enid—Enid might meet her again!"

"Go back to the house, aunt Leo," said the young man tenderly, "and leave her to me. It is too great a strain upon your endurance, I see. I will take the child to the Rectory; Mrs. Rumbold will know of some home where she will be taken in—the farther away from Beechfield the better."

Miss Vane was unusually agitated. Her face was pale and her lips moved nervously; she carefully averted her eyes from the little girl whom she had undertaken to question. Evidently she was on the verge of a breakdown.

"I never was so foolish in my life as I have been to-day. My nerves are all unstrung," she said, turning her back on little Jenny Westwood. "I think I'll take your advice, Hubert. Ask Mr. and Mrs. Rumbold, from me to see after the child. If they want money, I don't mind supplying it. But do make them understand that the child must be kept out of Beechfield." And with these words she walked briskly down the avenue, without looking back. As she had said, the very sight of Andrew Westwood's daughter made her ill.

Hubert turned again towards the girl, wondering whether she had overheard the conversation, which had been carried on in low tones, and, if she had overheard it, how much she understood. He could not find out from her face.

It was not a face that lacked intelligence, but it was at present sullen and forbidding in expression. The black hair that hung over her eyes hid her forehead, and gave her a rough, almost savage look.

"You do not want to go back to the workhouse, do you?" Hubert said keenly regarding her stubborn face.

"No—I won't go back."

"Why not?"

A hot burning flush sprang to the child's cheeks.

"They call me names," she said in a low voice.

"They? Who? And what names?"

"The other girls, and the mistress too, and the women. They say that my father's wicked, and that I am wicked too. They say that he is to be hanged."

The child suddenly burst out crying; her sobs, loud and unrestrained, fell painfully on Hubert's ear.

"I went to prison to see him, but they would not let me; and then I came back here."

She sobbed for a minute or two longer, and then became quiet as suddenly as she had broken into tears, rubbing her eyes with one hand, and peering furtively at Hubert between the black fingers.

"They were wrong," Hubert said at length. "Your father is not dead; he is not to be hanged at all." He paused before he spoke again. "He is in prison; he will be in prison for the rest of his life—a life sentence!"

He spoke rather to himself than to the child.

Never before had he realized so fully as at that moment what prison actually meant.

To be shut up, away from friends, away from home, away from the sweet wild woods, the country air, the summer sun, to labor all day long at some heavy monotonous task, such as breaks the spirit and the heart of men with its relentless uniformity of toil—to wear the prison garb, to be known by a number, as one dead to the ordinary life of men, leaving at the prison gates that name which would henceforth be only a badge of disgrace to all who bore it in the outer world—these aspects of Andrew Westwood's sad case flashed in a moment across Hubert Lepel's mind with a thrill of intolerable pain.

What could he do? Rise up and offer to bear that terrible punishment himself?

It could not be—for Florence's sake, he told himself, it could not be. And yet—yet——

Would that at the very beginning he had told the truth, and stood where Andrew Westwood stood, so that the ruffian and the poacher might not have to bear a doom that separated him for ever from his only child!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE question is often asked, "from where do all these flies come?" and seldom receives as satisfactory an answer as has been given by a contemporary: The common fly lays more than 100 eggs, and the time from egg-laying to maturity is only about two weeks. Most of us have studied geometrical progression. Here we see it illustrated. Suppose one fly commenced "to multiply and replenish the earth" about June 1. June 15, if all lived, would give 150. Suppose 75 of these are females, July 1 would give us, supposing no cruel wasp or other untoward circumstances to interfere, 11,250 flies. Suppose 5625 of these are females, we might have, July 15, 843,750 flies. For fear of bad dreams I will not calculate what might be by September 15.

Bric-a-Brac.

RIGHT OR LEFT.—Suppose a person takes an even number of coins or counters or anything else in one hand, and an odd number in the other, there is a simple method by which to tell in which hand the even number is. Ask her to multiply the number in her right hand by an odd number, and the number in her left hand by an even; then let her add the two products together and tell you if the total sum be odd or even. If it be even, the even number is in her right hand, and if it be odd the even number is in the left hand.

ALL SMOKERS.—All of the Burmese people smoke—men, women and children, says a correspondent. "I have not yet seen babies leave the breast for a whiff of a cigarette, as books on Burmah state they do, but I see many three and four year old children smoking, and the Burmese maidens learn to smoke as soon as they can walk. All of the girls are adepts in rolling cheroots, and in Burmese courting, the girl gives her lover cheroots rolled with her own hands and the two take, I doubt not, whiffs about in the smoking of them. It is common to pass the cigar from one friend to another, and in a group of three girls whom I watched having their fortunes told under the shadow of the great golden pagoda, I saw that one cigar did for the trio."

TREES.—We read of the righteous as representing a tree of life, and they are declared to be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, while the wicked are likened to a Green Bay tree, and the ungodly to an Oak whose leaf fadeth. The Green Bay tree is a species of Laurel. The first Pliny collected and recorded the information and opinions concerning it current in his time. It was held sacred to Apollo, and used as a symbol of victory. It was used by the Romans to guard the gates of Cæsar, and that worn by Augustus and his successors had a miraculous history, the grove at the Imperial villa having grown from a shoot sent by Livius Drusilla from heaven. Among the Indians of Brazil there is a tradition that the whole human race sprang up from a Palm tree. It has been a symbol of excellence for things good and beautiful.

FIREDM RINGS.—In Berkshire there was a popular superstition that a ring made of a piece of communion silver was a sure cure for fits and convulsions. The same diseases were also cured by a ring formed of five silver coins, collected from as many bachelors, who must have been kept in ignorance of the purpose for which the contribution was levied, else its efficacy would be destroyed. Rings fashioned from coffin hinges were looked upon as a specific for cramps. And so on, through a long list of ills and illusions, the ring has constantly been put forward as a remedy or preventive. There is an old belief, dating back to ancient Rome, that a small artery runs from the third (or fourth, counting the thumb) finger of the woman's left hand directly to the heart. Modern anatomists have exploded this sentimental idea, but is formerly obtained the widest credence, so much that in cases of sudden seizure, or "swound," restoratives were applied to this finger in the belief that its direct communication with the heart would restore the patient.

THE MOSQUE OF ST. SOPHIA.—The mosque of St. Sophia, in Constantinople, was originally built as a Christian temple by the Emperor Justinian. There is a legend that he had intended to raise it alone and unaided, and he sent his heralds out to proclaim that no one should in any way contribute to the expense of the enterprise. Yet, when the building was completed, he was amazed to find, instead of the inscription, "This House the Emperor Justinian gave to God," the words, "This House the Widow Euphrasia gave to God." The sculptor, questioned by the wrathful emperor, protested that he had carved in the marble what the emperor had commanded. To this others gave witness. It was a miracle. But who was Euphrasia, the wealthy widow who dared to disobey the Cæsar's orders? No one could answer, until, at last, a priest said he knew one widow of that name, who was old and bed-ridden—surely that cannot be she. Nevertheless, she was brought before the emperor, and she then confessed that she had thrown a little straw before the beast who had drawn the marble from the ships. Then the emperor recognized that his gift had been rejected simply because the gift of pride, while that of the poor widow had been accepted because of its love.

A SINGLE grateful thought toward Heaven is a most effective prayer.

"COME UNTO ME."

BY MRS. C. BANKS.

Solemn, sublime, and grand, the anthem swells
To the groined roof, and down the pillard aisle,
As sweet and clear as chime of silver bells:
And flying seraphs from the sacred pile
Waft the young echoes over land and sea,
"Come, oh, ye weary, come for rest to Me."

Bid ivory keys release imprisoned sound;
Let the whole choir, as with one vocal throat,
Waken with trumpet-blast the sleepers round;
But sing with softest, most melodious note
The loving call of Christ to bond and free,
"Come, oh, ye weary, come for rest to Me."

One soul has heard, one soul has chosen rest
Under the shadow of the shelt'ring Rock.
Some other soul may hear, and join the blest,
If ninety-nine are deaf—or, hearing, mock.
Rejoice o'er one, and hymn out, far and free,
"Come, oh, ye weary, come for rest to Me."

SIBYL'S CONCERN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY." "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE younger members of the Society of Friends at Brierley came down to breakfast on the Friday morning following Sibyl Aythea's eventful escapade, to find certain letters awaiting them, which were the cause of a vast amount of wonder and expectation.

Annie Riley perhaps, of all the number, felt herself to be the most surprised, for the simple reason that she considered she had a right to a previous knowledge; and the surprise was anything but an agreeable one, though the letter ought to have given her great pleasure, for it contained neither more nor less than an invitation to a garden-party at Joshua Worthington's beautiful old house, the Homestead, on the Wednesday.

This was young Joshua's doing, as she knew only too well; he alone had the power to persuade his grandfather to take such a step.

For Joshua's pleasure, the extensive grounds were thrown open once every summer; and a solemn dinner, once every winter, was given.

Formal as were these entertainments, they were eagerly anticipated by the guests, who, being by no means overburdened with invitations, were not so apt to be fastidious as their more fortunate neighbors, and the meeting in the garden, where the sloping lawns and shady winding paths afforded unlimited opportunities of escaping from the host's ceremonious politeness and his daughter's searching scrutiny, was especially welcome.

Nevertheless, though these two festivities were now looked upon as "fixtures," it was well known that to two out of the three members of the household they were distasteful, so that an extra and completely unlooked-for invitation, such as that morning's post had brought with it, could not fail to be the subject of much questioning and discussion.

It was little more than a month since they had stood together beneath the spreading beeches which shaded the principal lawn, had partaken of strawberries and cream in the library, and admired for the fiftieth time the massive elegance of the family plate, and the spotless delicacy of Mary Catherine's boasted table-linen; and now once more their presence was requested on a similar occasion!

"What can be Joshua's idea?" Annie asked herself curiously.

He had not seemed too well satisfied with the success of the last occasion, and only a week since had expressed an intention of finding out something a little livelier for next summer's celebration.

What had happened to change his resolution since then?

Annie sat gazing thoughtfully before her; she had come down, as usual, before any of the rest of the family—a goodly number, from the chairs set in order round the well-spread breakfast-table—to make the last arrangements for the comfort and completeness of the meal.

She had moved deftly about from sideboard to cupboard, and from cupboard to sideboard, doling out and filling up; had laid the newspaper beside her father's plate, and freshened up the great china bowl of flowers which graced the centre of the table with a few sprays from the luxuriant creepers outside the open window, before she cast a glance in the direction of the morning's letters.

Annie had a very humble opinion of her own appearance; but, though she could not claim the slightest pretensions to beauty, most people would have found a great deal to admire in the tall, graceful, finely-dressed figure, in its well-fitting brown cashmere dress, relieved only at neck and wrists by the snowy turned-down white collar and cuffs, in the clear honest brown eyes and healthy complexion.

Hers was not a type of beauty which depended on mere youth and happiness, or would disappear with the arrival of gray hairs and wrinkles.

She would be a finer-looking woman at forty than she was at twenty-five, and—given a tolerably happy life—would look very little older into the bargain.

Slowly, as she sat revolving the situation in her active mind, a deep flush mounted to her forehead; she drew her lips tightly together, and her forehead contracted with a heavy frown.

It was since Saturday only that Joshua could have changed his intention—since Saturday.

Was it anything that had occurred on First-day, on Sunday, which had influenced him?

Was it—Sibyl Aythea? It was of little use hesitating or beating about the bush.

Annie knew, as if by instinct, the very moment that the thought occurred to her, that she was certainly on the right track.

She had noticed, as indeed no one could have failed to do, Joshua's undisguised admiration of the beautiful stranger; this was evidently his first step towards a better acquaintance.

Miss Aythea, as William Pollard's guest, would be, unless he himself took the initiative, almost as completely out of his path as if she were hundreds of miles away, for the relations between the two young men were not sufficiently cordial to allow Joshua either to call on his own account or to expect an invitation to the house. Caroline Pollard however would be very unlikely to refuse for her friend an invitation which afforded, at the very dullest season of the year, an opportunity of seeing the best people and the best house in the neighborhood.

That was it, then! Joshua, as usual, had laid his plans with care and foresight.

Nevertheless Annie, as she came to this conclusion, felt no admiration, but a very sore and bitter feeling of indignation.

It was not fair, it was not right, it was not true to herself that he should thus be led away by the first pretty face that happened to cross his path.

Annie drummed impatiently upon the table; for the hundreth time she found her anomalous position almost unbearably trying.

The attachment between Joshua Worthington the younger and Annie Riley, dating back now over a period of a dozen years, was one of those extraordinary affairs, inexplicable to every looker-on, in which a strong noble nature lavishes all its wealth of affection upon an utterly unworthy and unappreciative object, to be in return regarded with condescending affection, rendered alternately miserable by neglect, or rapturously happy by a passing caress or word of kindness.

Annie Riley, as a little girl in short petticoats, had felt herself supremely honored at juvenile festivities when the handsome boy, with his lazy supercilious air, had sauntered across the room and offered her the honor of his partnership in the various games and trials of skill which formed their childish amusements, and had been filled with the humblest and most heartfelt gratitude.

Joshua however had not been actuated by any charitable or disinterested motive in his choice; he knew that though Annie did not happen to be pretty, she was sharper and cleverer than all the other girls put together.

She and her partner were tolerably sure to come off victorious, and Joshua liked to be on the winning side.

He was fond of her too, in a selfish patronizing manner, feeling a proud sense of possession towards the keen intellect which was always ready to be used for his own benefit or defence, and, as far as in him lay, he was grateful for her affection.

As years passed by the unacknowledged bond strengthened rather than loosened, but, as was almost inevitable in the circumstances, became beset with new difficulties.

Joshua was one of those amiable young men who have not the slightest hesitation in compromising a girl by every attention in their power, while disdainfully refusing to fetter their own valuable liberty. Thus Annie, without actually being engaged, was generally considered to be only awaiting Joshua Worthington's slightest invitation in order to become so—a position intolerable to any girl of spirit; and yet, strangely enough, a want of spirit was the last thing in the world of which her bitterest enemy could have accused Annie Riley.

Again and again, when circumstances had been more than usually trying, had she determined to put an end to this painful state of uncertainty, to absent herself from home for a lengthy period, to treat Joshua with persistent coldness, or even to tell him plainly that his attentions were not desired.

But each time both duty and inclination seemed to point to what was really the most difficult course—that of all allowing things to go on in their own natural way.

Duty—because Annie knew, and gloried in the knowledge, that she was and always had been the one good influence in Joshua's life; that to every true and honest purpose he possessed she alone held the key; and that, if he were ever to become anything but a selfish and unprincipled man, it would be, humanly speaking, due to her influence.

Inclination—because poor Annie loved him with all the force of a warm and passionate nature.

Engrossed as she was by these conflicting thoughts, Annie had not for some time noticed the very marked attention which was being paid her in another quarter; for, while Joshua Worthington was still hesitating whether or not he should favor one so comparatively insignificant by a proposal, another man had made the discovery that the world had nothing else which could possibly weigh down the balance with him against Annie Riley's love.

This man was no contemptible rival even to rich old Joshua Worthington's only grandson, being the first doctor in the town a man of assured and rising position, and deserved popularity.

Doctor Waters coolly ignored young Joshua's quiet monopoly, and seized every opportunity of enjoying Annie's society, often thereby successfully ousting his unacknowledged rival.

When this new and astonishing state of affairs became clear to young Worthington's by no means observant eyes, he took refuge in a fit of sullen anger, fuming mentally over this infringement of his hitherto undisputed rights; but neither by word nor deed did he betray his anger to the person most concerned.

The plan of quietly keeping out of the way, whatever advantage it might possess, could not be considered altogether efficacious, inasmuch as it left undisputed possession to another; and one spring evening, walking home from a week-night meeting, Joshua determined to come to an open understanding on the matter.

"Annie," he said, "I want to speak to you about something. What does that fellow Waters mean by hanging about you the way he does?"

"What does it mean? It means that he likes to talk to me, of course—and that I like to talk to him too," returned Annie glibly, woman enough to feel an intense pleasure in this rare opportunity of teasing her tardy lover.

"Oh, indeed! And what do you intend to do in the end, if one may ask?"

"I don't understand you."

"You understand me perfectly well. What do you intend to do when he asks you to marry him?"

"Well, in the first place, I intend to wait until I am asked."

Annie tossed her head, and Joshua flushed angrily.

"Well, I'm tired of this sort of work. I'm not going to play turn and turn about with another fellow for any one living. You'll have to end it one way, Annie. Make up your mind and say which it is to be. You have got to choose between us, and you might as well do it now as later on. Is it to be he or I?"

Annie caught her breath. Had it come, then—this long-expected moment? The handsome face beside her dark and lowering, and she hardly knew for a moment in what spirit to answer.

"You are angry, Jos; you don't know what you're saying."

"I do know. It's of no use trying to put me off, Annie. Which is it to be? You have got to choose."

"Then I choose you, Jos—you know I do. You know I could never care for any one else——"

Annie held out her hand as she gently spoke.

Her upturned face, full of love and earnestness, looked very sweet in the faint moonlight; her wistful eyes gazed straight into his.

Joshua was touched and grateful; he put his arm round her waist and kissed her lips.

"Annie," he said, falling back into the sweetest possible phraseology of love—that of the simple old-world community—"thou art too good for me, sweetheart. I am not worthy of thee."

That was a blessed moment—a moment sweet enough to make up for many and many a weary week and month of waiting.

Annie went home that night in a perfect dream of happiness, seeing her whole life lying transformed and altered before her by those few words.

So Doctor Waters got his answer, which went far towards breaking one of the noblest hearts that ever beat, and Annie, settling down into ordinary life again as the days went on, began to realize with dismay that, in spite of that little episode in the quiet lane, there was no acknowledged difference in her relations with Joshua; for, once relieved of his dread of a rival, the young man had gone back to his old coolly patronizing manner, and made not the slightest attempt to proclaim an engagement.

It was a bitter awakening, and those early summer months had been full of perplexed anxiety and indecision.

Annie felt that this second invitation, with all the new crowd of fears which it brought in its train, was the last drop in an already overflowing cup.

Many a girl in her position would have determined on a dignified refusal, which would have spared her what was pretty certain to be a painful ordeal.

Not so Annie Riley; she would go, and look her best into the bargain; she would show neither suspicion nor coolness in her manner to Joshua, but from the experiences of that afternoon she would shape her after-course.

CHAPTER V.

JOSHUA WORTHINGTON had been correct in his conclusion that Mrs. Pollard would welcome the chance of any little excitement for her visitor, and especially that which was in his power to offer; for, though Miss Aythea might have been to many a grander and more aristocratic gathering, anything finer than the grounds of the Homestead she was not likely to have seen.

Caroline indeed was quite eager on the subject, for so absent-minded had Sibyl been at times for the past few days that she feared the quiet country life was already beginning to pall upon one accustomed to an almost ceaseless round of gaiety; so the invitation was accepted "with pleasure," and the two girls repaired straightway upstairs, to lay out dresses on the spare-room bed and to discuss their respective costumes for the occasion.

After the first glance at Sibyl's finery, Mrs. Pollard felt that there was only one course open to her—to go into town at once and order something new for herself. The old dress, beside the fact of its having been worn on the last occasion, a month since, presented a very crushed appearance, when contrasted with the fresh spotless folds of that of her friend.

Sibyl, who was nothing if not generous, was anxious that Carrie should order a duplicate for herself, and, failing to carry her point, threw all her energies into the task of choosing something equally tasteful and uncommon.

The resources of the Brierley dressmakers and milliners were taxed to their utmost, the two girls lunching in town and doing their best to make their pleasant occupation last as long as possible.

Mr. Pollard was not to return until late in the evening, so that there was nothing very interesting in prospect to entice them homeward; and, indeed the drawing-room looked decidedly dull and lonely without the presence of the genial host when Caroline and Sibyl walked in from the dining-room in their pretty evening dresses.

The place wore a chilly and cheerless aspect, and Sibyl stood still on the threshold and shivered.

"How cold it looks! Do let us go into the den, Carrie; it is so nice and cosy in there, and looks so much more cheerful."

"Yes, we will—come along," said Caroline briskly, shutting the drawing-room door behind her as she spoke, and leading the way to the smaller room on the opposite side of the passage. "We will have the lamps lighted at once, and each take a nice book and amuse ourselves till Will comes in. You take the Ilkley, Sibyl, and I'll have the sofa."

Carrie rang the bell, and ordered lights; and when, a few moments latter, the two crimson-shaded lamps were brought in, and placed on their respective tables, it would have been difficult to find a prettier or more inviting interior, or a greater contrast to the depressing gloom of the drawing-room.

Caroline, in her dainty brown-silk dress, had ensconced herself among a pile of bright cushions, and was already deep in her third volume, her left hand playing absently with the amber beads at her neck; Sibyl, rather pale and languid, lay back on the Ilkley, her dress of dark velvet, which fell in heavy folds to the ground, cut low round the soft round throat and draped with old lace.

Presently Sibyl laid her book down, clasped her hands tightly behind her head, and gave vent to a long sigh of contentment.

"This is nice—this is what I call a regular 'laze'—it's delightful! I do so enjoy these quiet evenings!"

Mrs. Pollard turned round brightly.

"Do you really? I'm so glad to hear you say that, Sibyl, for I've been afraid once or twice lately that it was too quiet for you—that you were feeling just a little bored."

"What in the world made you fancy that?"

"Oh, I don't know; you were quiet—not so talkative as usual, at any rate—and I thought you were dull!"

"Then it was very disagreeable of you to think anything of the sort! I have enjoyed every hour of the day. Why, Carrie, you don't know how delightful it is for me to be here! I think it is the first real home I have ever seen. We move about from one furnished house to another, and never settle anywhere for more than a few months at a time. And then auntie is not like a mother, you know; she takes a deep interest in my dresses and invitations, but that's about all; and father, though he is very fond of me, has his own interests and occupations."

Sibyl sighed pensively, then continued, in her brisker tones—"I love being here. I love the long quiet days alone with you. I love—at least, I mean, I like your husband with all my heart; he is a delightful man. I like Mrs. Lee, and I like—I almost think I love Annie Riley! I'm as happy as possible!"

"I'm delighted to hear it. I'm sure I love having you; but what has made you so quiet these last few days?"

"I didn't know I had been quiet. I was thinking, I suppose."

"Thinking! What about?"

Sibyl flushed faintly; she unclasped her hands and took up her book, with an air of determination.

"Oh—the affairs of the nation! Don't talk; Carrie I want to read."

Nevertheless, when silence reigned, and Caroline, a faint smile still lingering on her lips, was once more engrossed in her book, Sibyl's attention seemed remarkably prone to wander. She was just beginning the first volume of the three which lay on the little table beside her and had so far only reached the stage where the preliminary description of various characters was given.

The hero was painted in the most glowing terms, and yet it was over the paragraph devoted to the enumeration of his charms that Sibyl lingered most doubtfully.

He was fair and young, his flaxen locks curled in tight little rings close to his head, his bright boyish face shone with a happy mixture of good-humor and audacity; he awakened reminiscences at one moment of

an antique Greek god, at the next of a modern English undergraduate, and was supposed to represent the highest type of fascinating manhood; yet somehow the description appeared strangely feeble and unattractive.

A laughing fair-haired boy—what an unexciting hero!

Who cared to read of the silly adventures and flirtations of such a youngster? thought Sibyl, turning over the pages impatiently to get to a more advanced stage of the story.

For the next hour or two there was not a sound to be heard in the quiet room, except the occasional rustle of a leaf.

Caroline indeed was so completely absorbed in her book that, when at last a bell rang, and the subdued murmur of voices in the hall had already roused Sibyl's attention, she was still sublimely unconscious of all that was passing, and it was only when the door opened slowly, and a laughing face peered round the corner, that she raised her eyes, with a start.

"Good evening, young ladies!"

Amy Lee advanced into the middle of the room, looking as if she had just that moment stepped down from a mediæval stained-glass window, with her great dark eyes, short dishevelled locks, and full-sleeved scanty-skirted gown—for Amy adopted the severely æsthetic style of costume, and came through the ordeal successfully. "Well, I must say you look exceedingly comfortable!"

"Very comfortable indeed, thank you, ma'am."

Caroline yawned and stretched her arms, without making the slightest pretence of rising, for Amy was too constant a visitor to be treated with any ceremony; but the next moment, when Mr. Lee appeared in the doorway, both she and Sibyl hastily assumed an upright position.

"Oh, don't move; I'm so sorry I disturbed you! You made such a pretty picture—just like one of the domestic scenes on which the curtain rises at the theatre."

"What do you know about scenes at theatres? I'm surprised, George Lee; it's not what I expected of you! Well, I'm glad you've come across, and taken pity on two lone women; but why didn't you come an hour ago? I daresay the tea is cold by now."

The husband and wife looked at each other.

"Why don't you speak, George?"

Mr. Lee laughed.

"Why, my dear girl, you've done nothing but implore me not to speak for the last half-hour! I thought you wanted to tell them yourself."

"This sounds mysterious!"

Caroline rose and looked searchingly at Amy, who still retained the position she had taken up on her entrance into the room, her face beaming with mischief, her hands clasped behind her back. "Now, come, Amy, what is it? What are you hiding there? A letter? Whom is it from? If it's an invitation from the Worthingtons, we've one of our own, thank you."

"From the Worthingtons"—Mrs. Lee laughed derisively—"from the Worthingtons! To a Worthington, you mean! There, Miss Mary Catherine, allow me to present you with a letter from your latest victim and admirer! You should have had it sooner, but George went off too early for the post this morning, and only came in an hour ago. There!"

Amy stretched out her hand, advanced towards Sibyl, as she sat in bewildered silence, and, with a low mocking bow, laid an envelope upon her knee.

"'Miss Mary Catherine Worthington. Favored by George Lee, Esq.!' But it isn't for me—it can never be meant for me!" cried Sibyl, holding the corner of the envelope gingerly in her hand, and looking round, with startled eyes. "Where did it come from? Who gave it to you? Mr. Lee"—reproachingly—"it isn't really meant for me?"

"It is, indeed, Miss Aythen. It came this morning, enclosed in a letter to myself, which, perhaps, I had better show—at least, read to you, so as to explain matters a little."

He put his hand into his coat pocket, and, pulling out a bundle of letters, selected one, opened it slowly, and ran his eye down the page.

"It's from Ralph Gaskell, of course—my cousin, whom you—er—interviewed the other evening.

"'Dear George—May I ask you to be so good as to add to your many kindnesses to me by handing the enclosed note to the lady whom I had the pleasure of seeing at your house the other evening? I do not, of course, know her address, and am not willing to trust to chance for its safe delivery. Perhaps it is only right that I should explain——'

Ah, hum—yes! I need not read any more—that is all that is necessary, I think. It's a good thing he did not trust to chance, isn't it?"

"Oh"—Amy clasped her hands and shuddered, with exaggerated horror—"doesn't it make you ill to think of it? Goodness, Sibyl, what a terrible plight you might have landed us all in by this time! I'm afraid one person hasn't escaped as it is. Do open the letter and see what he says!"

"Shall I Caroline?"

Sibyl's heart was beating fast with excitement; she had to press her hands together to hide their nervous trembling; she longed, yet dreaded to see what was contained in the envelope, while Caroline was far too much overpowered by curiosity to think of anything but its gratification.

"Yes, of course; it's the only thing to do. Would you like me to read it for you?"

"Oh, no, thank you!"

Sibyl broke the seal hastily, unfolded the letter, and, amidst a breathless silence, bent her head over it.

Mr. and Mr. Lee looked on complacently; but Caroline felt a pang of responsibility as she noticed Sibyl's absorption, and the soft flush which rose to her very forehead as she read.

"My dear Miss Worthington"—Sibyl paused a moment to steady her nerves, noticing as she did so the look of refinement about the missive, the dull thick paper, with its crest in simple white relief, the clear firm handwriting, the bold sweeping lines of the signature—"May I beg you to suspend your judgment on my apparent presumption in venturing to write to you after such a very short acquaintanceship until after you have read what I have to say, and to deal with me then as mercifully as lies in your power. I am painfully conscious that I am about to take a very unusual step; but I am doing so at least in no hasty spirit of impulse, but in accordance with a long fixed intention, which however has never, until quite lately, received the impetus to action.

"Why should a man be allowed the privilege of speaking the whole truth in every case except the one which is surely the most important of all, when it concerns the happiness and welfare of his whole life? I have always reserved to myself the liberty of speaking plainly on this matter also, whenever the time should come for me to do so. Therefore I ask you now if you will allow me to pursue the acquaintance which we accidentally formed the other day. It is exceedingly unlikely that we shall meet again in the same manner, and I for one am not willing to leave it to chance. May I ask you if you will deal with me as openly and truthfully as I am dealing with you, and tell me at once if there is any reason why I had better not endeavor to continue the friendship which has opened out such possibilities before me? If I do not receive any such answer, I will conclude that you are gracious enough to grant me all that I ask at present—permission to see you again—and will come down to Brierley at the earliest opportunity.

"Faithfully yours,
RALPH GASKELL."

"Carrie—Carrie—oh, Carrie, Carrie—what shall I do?"

"Whatever is the matter? Don't be frightened, Sibyl! Whatever he says, he cannot hurt you. Let me read the letter."

Sibyl involuntarily grasped the sheet of paper more tightly, but the next moment held it out without a word.

It would never do to appear to have any personal feeling in the matter; yet no girl ever called upon to give over to curious eyes the first most precious message of love could possibly have felt more intensely reluctant or distressed.

Amy Lee ran across the room, and thrust her saucy face over Caroline's shoulder, and the two girls kept up a running fire of comments as they read.

"Goodness me, how formal! 'Impetus'—what big words he uses! 'Concerns the happiness and welfare of his whole life'—well, he has made up his mind quickly enough, at any rate! 'Come down to Brierley'—good gracious, you may well look frightened, Sibyl!"

Caroline gazed blankly into her friend's face for a moment, and then burst out laughing.

"Caroline—don't!"

Sibyl spoke sharply; she had risen from her seat, and stood erect in the middle of the room, a brilliant spot of color in each cheek, her eyes unnaturally bright.

"Don't laugh; I don't know what in the world you're laughing at! I think it is awful! I wish I'd never dressed up at all—I wish I'd never stirred out of this house! What am I to do?"

"Don't do anything, and let him come down to interview Mary Catherine; it would be killing!" said Amy, giggling.

But at that Mrs. Pollard sobered down with amazing rapidity.

"Good gracious, no! How can you talk of such a thing, Amy! We should get into dreadful trouble, and Will would be distressed beyond anything. Sibyl, he must not come! You must write and say—I'm sure I don't know what you'd better say—but we can't risk anything. It frightens me to think of it. Why, he might come to-morrow!"

"Well, if he did, he would come straight to me for the address, and I'd manage to bluff him somehow," put in Mr. Lee. "You needn't get alarmed about that, Caroline; he would be sure to come to me first."

"He might or he might not; he might feel embarrassed about seeing you after this, and ask some one else to direct him. Every one knows where the Worthingtons live; or you might be out when he called—you don't know what might happen."

Caroline caught her breath with excitement.

"For goodness' sake, Sibyl, write at once, and let George take it down to the chief post-office now. Say you can't possibly see him at present—you're staying away from home—anything, only, for goodness' sake, keep him away from Brierly!"

"Tell him who you are at once, and then he can come—if you like," said Amy, with a shrewd side-glance which made Sibyl wince.

"Oh, I couldn't! Wait till I get safely home before you tell him. I couldn't bear him to come. I should be so—so ashamed. I'll just say I'd rather he didn't come."

"Yes, yes; that will do."

Caroline was busy at the other end of the room, putting out envelopes and paper, and signalled impatiently that there was no time to be lost.

"Come along; you haven't a moment to spare! You need only write a line, but it must go off to-night. There's no knowing what an impetuous man like that may do if he is not stopped in time! Quick—there's a dear!"

Sibyl seated herself and took up the pen, then turned round, with an unsteady laugh.

"I can't write a word while you are all staring at me like that. Please go away to the other end of the room."

"Yes; come and have some tea while you are waiting. It has been under the cosy all the time, so I dare say it is quite drinkable."

Carrie frowned significantly to her friends, and the trio clinked their cups and saucers energetically and made a pretence of keeping up a brisk conversation, as they cast sly backward glances at the graceful figure leaning over the devonport and listened curiously to the slow movement of the pen.

It was terribly difficult to know what to say, driven into a corner like this, pressed for time, with every tick of the clock taking away another of the few remaining moments, and with duty and inclination warring fiercely against each other.

In all fairness to Caroline, in all consideration for her host and his principles, Sibyl felt herself bound to reply with the utmost firmness and decision; but surely in such a closely personal question her own feelings should count for something.

Was there no middle course possible—no way of reconciling Carrie's wishes and her own. She could not persuade herself to send an absolute refusal—deliberately to shut every door against the possibility the very thought of which made her heart beat fast with happy agitation.

It would surely be sufficient to put him off for the present, to ask him to defer his visit until such time as she was able to decide how best to make the necessary explanations.

She would follow Carrie's advice, and plead some excuse which would cause delay.

"I cannot ask thee to come and see me at present, but I will speak plainly to thee too. In a little time the obstacle now existing will be removed, and then, if thou still carest, we may perhaps meet again."

* * * * * *

She added a few hurried lines, and then, with a long sigh of relief, thrust the folded sheet into the already addressed envelope, and held it out at arm's length.

"Oh, you've fastened it up!"

Caroline looked crestfallen.

"Is it stamped? Yes. Now, George, leave Amy here till you come back, and go as fast as you can—there's a good fellow. You are sure you have plenty of time?"

Mr. Lee was quite sure, and, lighting a cigar in the hall, let himself out at the front door, while his wife seated herself on the sofa, and began a brisk fire of questionings.

"Well, it's rather mean of you not to have told us your answer! What did you say?"

"Oh, I thanked him! I said there was an obstacle—really I hardly know what I said."

"Poor fellow, it's rather hard lines on him, you know! Won't he be disappointed! He'll think you are engaged to somebody else."

Sibyl gave a start of unaffected alarm, then colored vividly.

"Oh, no, I don't think he will—I didn't put it like that exactly! It didn't sound as if I meant that."

"Ah," exclaimed Amy, laughing, "I'm afraid you're a bit of a flirt; but you must not trifle with Ralph—he's far too nice to be played with! How did you write your letter? Did you keep up your character, and stick to the 'thees' and 'thous,' or did you write in the usual way?"

I wrote like a friend—at least, I tried to do so. I had no time for explanations, you know."

"And the signature? I suppose you managed to get out of that altogether?"

Sibyl looked startled.

"No—I never thought of it! I signed it, without thinking. Will it matter? He addressed me by her name, you know; and I ——"

"You don't mean to say you signed it 'Mary Caroline Worthington?'"

"Yes, I did! Didn't you intend me to?"

Carrie shrugged her shoulders.

"Well, if it does, it is my fault; I hurried you into it! No, don't worry, Sibyl; it can't matter! There's no harm in it—is there, Amy?"

Amy shook her head very emphatically.

"Not a bit. Silly, bigoted, old-fashioned people might make themselves generally unpleasant, and call it forgery; but we know better, and, fortunately, we're the people concerned. You may make your mind easy, Sibyl; you shall not make the acquaintance of the county gaol yet awhile!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DRINKING ICE-WATER.—Says one of the most eminent doctors in America: Water for drinking purposes should never be below 50 degrees.

We can almost always get it, even in the hottest weather, as cool as this by letting it run for a minute or two from any household faucet or drawing it from any country well.

If not, there is no objection to cooling it to the point mentioned. The East India "monkey," which can now be had almost anywhere in this country, and by means of which the contained water is cooled by its own evaporation, answers the purpose admirably.

I am quite sure, that, if ice-water should be generally discarded as a drink, the average duration of life would be lengthened and existence rendered more tolerable.

THE ROSE.

There are several legends to account for the origin of the rose. Here is a very beautiful one:

A certain Jewish maiden, Zillah, rejected the advances of a lover, Hammal, a degraded and cruel man. In revenge he accused her of offenses for which she was condemned to be burned at the stake.

When brought to the spot the flames did no harm to the maiden, but consumed the false lover.

"And the fyre began to burne about hire, she made her prayers to oure Lord and anon was the fayer quenched an oute and brandes that were brennynge becomen white roses, and theise were in the first rosers that ever any man saughe."

The burning brands thus became red roses—the other ones white.

According to a Greek myth, red roses were white ones, tinged with the blood of Venus, who wounded her foot on a thorn while hastening to the aid of the dying Narcissus.

According to another legend, they sprang from the bath of Aphrodite.

A later Christian tradition asserted that the crown of thorns was one of the rose thorn, and that the red roses sprang from the blood of Christ.

A still different origin is given to the "queen of flowers," by Mussulman tradition. According to it, white roses sprung from the sweat of the prophet Mohammed during his journey to heaven, and yellow ones from perspiration dripping from the mane of Al Borak, his steed.

It is further reported that the red flower is colored with drops of his blood, and the faithful will never suffer one to lie on the ground.

There is an Arab tradition that a certain King Shaddad planted a field of roses in the desert, which are still flourishing, but no man can find them.

The rose has always been an important flower in folk legends.

The rose of Jericho, also called the rose of the Virgin Mary, became the symbol of the resurrection.

It is not really a rose, however. A tradition reported that it marked every spot where the holy family rested during the journey to Egypt.

The Syrians regarded the rose as an emblem of immortality. Chinese plant it over graves, and in the Tyrol it is said to produce sleep.

Germans call the rose of Jericho the Christmas rose, and it is supposed to divine the events of the year, if steeped in water on Christmas Eve.

There are many other superstitions about the rose. It is said in Persia that there is a certain charmed day in which the rose has a heart of gold.

Another tradition relates that there is a silver table on a certain Mount Calmay, in India, and on this table lies a silver rose that contains two beautiful women who praise God without ceasing. In the centre of the rose is the triangle—the residence of God.

One of Vishnu's wives is said to have sprung from a rose. In Germany, the rose has been a favorite flower.

It is one of those mysterious blossoms, like the "forget-me-not," that unlocks treasures concealed in caves or castles.

The rose was a favorite flower of Holda, the Northern Venus, and, in Christian hands, became the "Marien-roschen" of the Virgin.

The white rose is usually Mary's emblem. She dries her veil on a rosebush, which bears no more flowers thereafter.

It is probable that rosebuds were the larger beads in the Catholic rosary, the German Rosenkranz, or rose wreath.

It is said that if a white rose blooms in Autumn, an early death is prognosticated, while an Autumn-blooming red rose signifies marriage.

The red rose, it is also said, will not bloom over a grave.

Rose leaves are sometimes thrown on the fire for good luck, and a rose bush may be made to bloom in Autumn by pruning it on St. John's Day.

Here, as well as in France and Italy, it is believed that rosy cheeks will come to the lass who buries a drop of her blood under a rose bush.

In Posen, young women assure the fidelity of their lovers by carrying a rosebud in the breast.

Rose leaves are chosen for divination in Thuringia, the maiden having several lovers scattering a leaf named after each one on the water: the leaf that sinks last is the true lover.

Charms for stopping hemorrhage are connected with the rose. One of these, used in Germany, runs this: "In God's garden bloom three roses—blood-drop, blood-stop and blood-still; blood, I pray you, cease to flow."

The rose was a potent ingredient in love philters in England and Scotland a century ago.

CHARITY.

Oh, Charity's angel is winsome of face;
Charity's angel gives free of her grace.

Here not to level the vengeance-tipped dart;
Here not to wound but to heal the sick heart.

Fair patron, gaiety, laughter, and mirth,
Her pulse keepeth time to the music of earth.

Self-righteousness looketh askance at an elf
That e'en hath a smile for Uncharity's self!

Forgotten Words.

BY E. V. HENRY.

CHAPTER II.

THE great ladies of Mayfair were only too delighted to get Miss Delapierre to their entertainments; and, as she now advanced with very easy grace through the crowded room, she was, in the judgment of most, the handsomest woman there.

There was nothing stagy or theatrical about her.

Her gown, of perfectly plain white silk, admirably enhanced the pearly lustre of her splendid shoulders; but she wore neither flower, nor lace, nor jewel—very wisely, for her exquisite face, with its speaking brown eyes and delicately-cut features, needed no such artificial aid.

An air of serene indifference distinguished her bearing.

As she came forward, it was quite evident that she cared nothing for the whole glittering throng.

Society was all the more determined to make much of her, because she cared so little for it, and had never permitted success to turn her head.

"My dear Miss Delapierre," laughingly remonstrated the hostess as she shook hands with marked civility, "you are late! I had almost given you up."

The new-comer turned her eyes, which, for all their brilliancy, had a strange weariness in them, upon the gushing lady, and answered quietly:

"An actress's time is not her own, you know, Lady Caroline."

"No, of course it isn't; and it is too awfully sweet of you to come at all. Now let me find you a seat. Ah, thank you, Captain Darcy. Madame Squallentanga is just going to give us a song, and I'm glad you're in time to hear it."

As Lady Caroline disappeared amid her throng of guests, the blackcoats, which had hitherto been blocking up the windows and doors rather than mingle with the feminine population, began to arrive in twos and threes about the actress's chair, until she was the centre of a group of men about ten deep.

She bestowed very little attention upon them, but smiled bitterly to herself as she thought how much had happened since little Bessie Peters, years ago, trudged about the miry country lanes with her basket.

"If anybody had told me then that I should live to refuse a Duke——" she idly speculated, as she tapped her fan against her knee.

How remote those old days seemed, and yet how near!

She had gained much experience since the day when, distracted by her uncle's tyrannical command that she should marry Martin Bowman, and miserable at the marriage of Maurice Carrington, she made her escape from Graybourne to her cousin Mary, the actress, who with her husband received her kindly, and discovering that she possessed real talent, assisted her to make her debut on the provincial boards as Elizabeth Delapierre.

Hers had been a hard struggle; but she had come out of it victorious—at least; she was now sitting, a favored guest, in one of the most aristocratic mansions in London, with a crowd of admirers prepared to obey her least behest; and if that were not victory——!

Ah me! ah me! Surely it was a very false and hollow kind of success after all!

Bessie Peters that night found herself asking her own heart very seriously whether the game was really worth the candle.

The decorous little house in which she resided at Kensington, presided over by an elderly duenna of rigid propriety, was not home; the formal round of society functions in which she participated were not pleasures.

There really seemed to be nothing particularly worth living for, after all!

She quite started when Lady Caroline bent over her chair, with a pressing request that she would give them a little—ever such a little recitation.

"Anything—no matter what! A nursery rhyme, or the multiplication-table, or any nonsense you like. So long as you give it, it is sure to be right!"

Her ladyship was not far from the truth, for, amid the crowd of amateur and professional reciters then contending for the suffrages of London society, there was not one who combined natural ability and physical charm as did Elizabeth Delapierre.

Her hostess anxiously watched her face for a sign of consent.

The great actress was proud, farouche, capricious.

Sometimes she would not open her lips even to please very great ladies indeed, and again she would recite quite charmingly for mere nobodies who did not half appreciate their good fortune.

But this time Lady Caroline was gratified, for, after a moment's pause, Miss Delapierre moved forward into the centre of the room, a chair was placed for her, and, as everybody whispered:

"Hush," she began in an exquisitely trained voice:

"The Revenge; a Ballad of the Fleet."

Perhaps her audience would have preferred something a little less hackneyed; but they disguised the fact gracefully, and a storm of applause greeted her at the close, as she was about to resume her seat.

The noise was so persistent that Lady Caroline again besought the beautiful actress to give them something, if only a few lines.

A curt refusal rose to Bessie's lips, for she was tired, and she stood in no awe of Lady Caroline.

But even as she began to utter the words, a marvellous thing happened.

Her eye had chanced to wander to a distant corner of the room, and for a moment she held her breath, almost sick with the sudden leap her heart gave at the unexpected sight of a face there.

The stately drawing-room, the tall lamps, the rows upon rows of expectant guests had all faded into nothingness—and, instead, she was again a girl in a muddy country lane, with the damp scents of a November morning rising about her, whilst in the foreground of the picture was a young horseman in a scarlet coat, with a hunting-crop in his hand.

"Yes," she said, turning to Lady Caroline with a very strange smile. "Yes, I will recite something else—a little bit of Tennyson."

"A little bit of Tennyson," was quickly murmured round the room; and she began:

"He passed; a soul of nobler tone:
My spirit loved and loves him yet,
Like some poor girl whose heart is set
On one whose rank exceeds her own."

She was only conscious of one listener; and she was speaking only to him, pouring out all that was in her heart, the more eagerly that it had been so long suppressed.

She cared nothing for the other guests, who sat spellbound, entranced by the exquisite voice which throbbed the room like passionate music.

No wonder she carried her audience away with her.

Her former recitation had been the perfection of trained skill; but these words came straight from her passionate heart with a force and fervor with which even her most ardent admirers had never yet credited her.

The pathos of the last line, with its despairing wail:

How should he love a thing so low?

was never forgotten by some of those who heard it.

And it was the highest tribute to her genius that, when she finished, not a syllable broke the hushed silence of the room: but the people all sat looking as if they were in church, so deeply had that simple touch of nature moved them.

"Nobody else could have rendered it with so much effect, Miss Delapierre," observed Lady Caroline at last, speaking with unconsciously literal truth. "If you had been all through it yourself, you could not have put more feeling into it. To say 'thank you' after such heavenly poetry would be mere bathos, and I won't. But I shall never forget it as long as I live."

"It is very good of you to say so," answered the actress, mechanically.

A minute ago her face was flushed with excitement, and her eyes shone like stars; but now she had turned strangely pale, and the fan she was holding trembled in her hand.

It was no wonder that she was agitated, for she had just seen Maurice Carrington again, for the first time since leaving Graybourne years ago.

She knew him again directly, even in that throng; he had not changed much, unless, as it seemed to her partial eyes, for the better.

He was still her handsome young hero, albeit he had seen trouble enough to turn his hair gray.

She had taken good care to keep herself acquainted with his movements.

She was aware that he had lost his wife after two years of marriage; that his mother was also dead; that he had been unfortunate on the turf and in speculation; and that the terrible agricultural depression had further so crippled his means that the Hall was heavily mortgaged, if not sold.

He was a ruined man that night, Bessie knew.

She had really believed him to be abroad.

He had resided on the Continent for some years, so that they had never met in society.

"I think I recognise an old acquaintance over there, by the middle window, Lady Caroline," she remarked, turning to her hostess. "Is that not Mr. Maurice Carrington of Grenby Mr. Foster is talking to?"

"Yes, it is. And you know him, you say?"

"Yes; I knew him years and years ago, when I was at Graybourne."

"How funny!" carelessly drawled the society lady. "Really, I had forgotten his existence until you spoke. He is a sort of cousin of my husband's, and I suppose Ralph picked him up at the club, or somewhere, and made him come. He has been sadly unlucky, and for years he has been abroad. I hope, with all my heart, he'll go back to the country and stay there, for poor relations are a nuisance, aren't they?"

That was the extent of Lady Caroline's feeling on the subject, and, somewhat disgusted, Bessie turned away. She hesitated a moment, and then saying to herself:

"After all, I am only an actress, and actresses can do anything," crossed the room and paused before Maurice, holding out her hand.

"I see you do not remember me, Mr. Carrington!"

He slowly scanned the exquisite face, now flushed like that of a very young girl.

"I cannot recall ever having had the pleasure of speaking to you before, Miss Delapierre, I believe!"

"Yet I come from Graybourne, near your old home; and I was at your birth-day ball thirteen years ago. I remembered you again instantly, though you have forgotten me."

He looked utterly bewildered.

"My stage name is Delapierre; but in those days I was Bessie Peters, the niece of old John Peters at the mill. Do you remember a little girl, in a white frock, who came with the Bowmans?"

"I think I do; but she was a mere child, a country girl—and you ——"

He paused expressively.

"I have developed since those days," said the actress, quietly; "but I am still the same—still Bessie Peters, with a very warm corner in my heart for my old home."

"I never go down in that part of the country now," he said, with a weary sigh. "The Hall has virtually ceased to belong to me, and it's a thousand to one that I shall never see Grenby again. I've been living abroad latterly. My wife is dead, as perhaps you know."

"I was very sorry to hear that you had had so many troubles, Mr. Carrington," said Bessie, with the womanly feeling that is so grateful to the soul of a dispirited man. "I, on the contrary, have had little but good fortune since leaving Graybourne. Sometimes, indeed, looking back on those days, I can hardly believe that it is not all a dream."

"I congratulate you most sincerely, Miss Delapierre," he said, turning his handsome, well-remembered eyes upon her with none of the indifference he had shown at Graybourne. "Although I have lived abroad, reports of your fame have reached me, although I never thought that you were identical with Bessie Peters of Graybourne days."

"I hope you won't think, because I have changed my name, that I am ashamed of it," she put in quickly. "I would not be such a snob as that; and if my time were to come over again, I should still be Bessie Peters. But when I first went on the stage I was very young and inexperienced, and I allowed myself to be overruled by those who declared I should have a much better chance of success if I adopted a foreign name. And now, of course, I must keep it."

"Je n'en vois pas la necessite," said Maurice, smiling at her earnestness. "I am sure you need not keep it a day longer than you feel inclined. If you are still Miss Delapierre, it cannot be because you have not had ample opportunities of becoming something else. But it is quite natural that you should be very hard to please."

The idle compliment would have been distasteful from anybody else; but coming from him, the distant and unapproachable young god of old days, it made her heart leap wildly.

Oh, sweetest moment, when the man she had adored so long and so hopelessly told her, with every appearance of sincerity, that she did quite right in being hard to please in her choice of a husband!

"It is getting very late, and the people are going fast," she observed, gravely. "Will you see me to my carriage, Mr. Carrington?"

And when he had put her into her brougham, she preferred a last request:

"You will come and see me? It is so pleasant to talk to anybody who knows Graybourne. Mrs. Malhuish, the lady with whom I reside, is always at home on Thursday afternoons. Say you will come."

The proud Miss Delapierre would hardly have been recognized again in the woman who pleaded so softly and so sweetly for such a trifling boon.

He promised after a moment's hesitation; and she sank back on her cushions, so utterly happy that she would not have changed places with any woman on earth.

"My darling! oh, my darling!" she murmured over and over again in the darkness, "I am glad I am beautiful and famous, because it makes me more worthy of you! And I have told you all my story. I recited that bit of Tennyson only for you; and yet you didn't guess it. Never mind, I will tell you some day!"

The thoughts of Maurice were of a less romantic cast as he walked home to his rooms, which were not far off.

Although practically a ruined man—"stone broke," to use the graceful idiom of the day—it never entered his head that he could reside in any other quarter of London than Mayfair.

He must have luxurious rooms and skilled attendance, albeit the Bankruptcy Court loomed big on his horizon.

He had come back to England to collect the remnants of his property, wasted by years of devotion to Continental gaming-tables; and also in the hope that some of his many influential relations and friends might be able to help him to some desirable and lucrative post.

He hated work; but the prospect of a certain income would be better than being eternally the prey of debt and duns.

"Fancy little Bessie Peters, the miller's niece, a guest of Lady Caroline's, and run after by Dukes and Duchesses!" he mused as he lighted another cigarette. "I can just remember her at the ball—a slim girl in a white frock, who blushed whenever I spoke to her. I suppose I had better go and see her. It appears that actors and actresses are accorded 'le haut du pave' now, though it wasn't so when I left England. She must know a lot of people, and it's possible she might help me to something."

It was not very long before he made his way to her house, where he found the actress and her duenna dispensing tea and cake to an assemblage of literary and artistic celebrities.

The tone of the gathering was decorous almost to dulness, and the subdued tints of the room were a further revelation of Miss Delapierre's character.

In his younger days, Maurice had visited at the houses of other actresses; but, albeit these ladies were famous in their own line, it was a line very different from this.

She looked very handsome as she greeted him with a smile and a flush of color in the cheeks which still defied the ravages of stage cosmetics.

If he had only known how tumultuously her heart was beating as she calmly told him she was glad to see him, and asked if he would like some tea!

It was like a delicious dream to be entertaining Maurice in her own house at last!

But there were many others with claims upon her attention, and she could not devote herself to the one guest she most esteemed.

When the people were beginning to go, however, he skilfully seized the opportunity to secure a vacant seat at her side.

"Let me give you another cup of tea," she said, eager to do him even that small kindness in default of a better.

"Thanks, I've almost got out of the way of drinking tea. One does abroad, you know, where the decoction is so execrable."

"You have been abroad for quite a long time?"

"Six years. It's a good slice out of a man's lifetime. And now that I am in England again, I don't think I shall stay. This is not a poor man's country, Miss Delapierre. I've had an offer to go and help an old schoolfellow, who's planting tea in Ceylon, and I think I shall accept it."

"Ceylon? That is a long way off."

"A very long way," he assented, moodily. "And slow enough when you get there, with no society, and no towns near. I hope you patronize our colonies in the way of tea, Miss Delapierre, and when you drink it, think sometimes how many of your expatriated countrymen are at present occupied in growing it for you."

"Couldn't you get anything to do nearer than Ceylon?"

"It seems not. I've been trying; but nobody appears to require my assistance in any department of life. Secretaryships, and all that kind of thing, are overdone. And now to come to a pleasanter topic. I went to your theatre the other night, and was simply charmed! It was certainly a most brilliant performance, even for you, to judge from the comments of people sitting near."

"A most brilliant performance!"

Her heart was beating madly, for that night she had acted solely for him—to him.

She had stepped on the stage somewhat worn-out and spiritless, as all actresses, being only mortal, must be at times; but the sight of him, sitting in the stalls, had acted like magic upon her nerves, and she had never played better in her life—and she knew it.

She only hoped she did not look too foolishly happy at his praise; but it was certainly one of the happiest moments in her life.

"I am glad you liked it," she said, quietly. "Pray come to the theatre whenever you like. As an old Graybourne acquaintance, I shall be pleased to welcome you. Have you any engagement for Saturday? I am going to give a matinee, and play Lady Teazle for the first time in London."

"Delightful! I'll be sure and come," said Maurice, getting up to go. "In old comedy you ought to be irresistible. I must confess I thought the piece I saw you in the other night poor and thin when you were off the stage."

"Must you go?" said Bessie, desperately, unwilling to trust him out of her sight. "Well, come some evening before long and dine with us and go to the theatre. And on Saturday remember you are pledged to be there."

Maurice was not slow to avail himself of her hospitality; and for the rest of the season the two were thrown much into each other's company.

Bessie made no attempt to evade her fate; but regulated all her movements according to his—going where she knew she would meet him; riding with him in the

Row, and inviting him to all entertainments at her house.

He found it pleasant enough to be the chosen escort of one of the most brilliant women in London.

But all these things cost money, and Maurice found himself sinking deeper and deeper in debt.

He played, too, when by some miracle he happened to be in possession of a little cash.

And he found the lucrative appointment, which he craved, more distant than ever.

"It will have to be Ceylon, after all!" he said gloomily one day, in the hearing of Miss Delapierre.

For all her self-control she paled a little.

"I thought you had quite abandoned that project."

"No; only laid it aside. My friend gave me three months to think it over, and, by Jove! I think I'll go while I have the chance. It will be a living, at any rate."

Two days after he received a delicately-worded epistle from the great actress, which effectually changed the current of his thoughts.

Her friend, Mr. Borrowdale, the celebrated actor and manager of the Pearl Theatre, was in need of a cultivated gentleman to act as his private secretary and advise him upon various points; and, if Mr. Carrington did not think such a post beneath him, she would speak to Mr. Borrowdale on his behalf.

The salary which she mentioned—struck Maurice as being high.

He did not know that Miss Delapierre had petitioned Mr. Borrowdale, who was a hard fisted North-countryman, to be allowed to double the usual amount, on the plea that Mr. Carrington was an old Graybourne acquaintance, to whose family—as she put it—she owed much, and wished to do a kindness.

Maurice, who had all a lazy, pleasure-loving man's detestation of new faces and new countries, readily accepted the offer.

He found his duties very light, and with moderate care the salary should have been ample; but money never would remain in his pockets, and he was often at his wits' end what to do.

Being pressed by an irate tradesman for the payment of an account, he allowed himself to be betrayed into a warmth which led to a summons before a magistrate, and divers witty paragraphs under such titles as "The Gentleman and his Bootmaker," in the papers.

He himself cared little about having his impecuniosity thus published to the world; but to Elizabeth Delapierre it seemed shocking that such humiliations should occur to the man she loved.

Without saying anything to Maurice, she went to her solicitor and requested him to find and pay, in secret, the most pressing of Maurice Carrington's creditors, so that he should be spared the annoyance of continual duns.

The man of business remonstrated, saying that Mr. Carrington's extravagant habits were the chief cause of his difficulties; but Bessie was firm.

The inroads thus made upon her capital were considerable, but she did not grudge the outlay.

She would have spent ten times as much for the privilege of keeping him at her side.

Life without Maurice would be simply unendurable.

She only lived in his presence; although she could not help wondering sometimes whether he felt as much pleasure in her company as she did in his.

Sometimes he seemed quite indifferent; at others he would be so earnest, so lover-like, that her heart beat high with hope.

Sometimes she feared that she must have betrayed her secret to him; for no other man had ever received such favors at her hands as Maurice Carrington.

But she omitted to make allowance for the receptiveness of his nature. He was a man accustomed to feminine adoration, and able to swallow a great deal of it without the least suspicion.

He liked to be waited upon by pretty women; it quite accorded with his notions of the fitness of things.

Once, however, they came perilously near to a disclosure, when Bessie was in a more melting mood than usual, and so weary of the present state of indecision, that she felt half-inclined to cut the Gordian knot by boldly telling Maurice all her story.

One night, after a gathering at her house, at which she had given some recitations to her guests, he began to speak of her first time he heard her recite at Lady Caroline's.

"You surpassed yourself that night; that bit of Tennyson was simply charming. Why have you never recited it since? I liked it better than anything you did to-night. It was about a poor girl caring for a fellow above her in the social scale. Let me see—how does it go?"

"He passed; a soul of nobler tone:
My spirit loved and loves him yet,
Like some poor girl whose heart is set
On one whose rank exceeds her own,"

murmured Bessie. "Do you know, Mr. Carrington, that was my own history."

"Yours?" he repeated, in astonishment.

"Yes."

She felt that she was growing utterly reckless.

"Years ago, at Graybourne, when I was a mere child, I—I cared very much for a man of higher position, and it was that which induced me to try and improve myself, and raise myself nearer to his level——"

"Why, this is quite a romance. And do you know, oddly enough, I never credited you with being a romantic person, Miss Delapierre. I don't know why, unless it is because you always seem to have a good reason for all you do. But you have outlived that early infatuation by this time, doubtless?"

"I shall never outlive it. My feelings have not changed."

She looked at him, sitting there in easy unconsciousness, and a mad impulse came over her to throw herself on her knees before him, and cry:

"Maurice, you are the idol of my youth, and I owe everything to you!"

She was actually coming nearer, and the words were trembling on her lips when the door opened, and Mrs. Melhuish entered.

"Bessie, dear," she said, tranquilly, peering about the room with her short-sighted eyes, "have you seen my glasses anywhere?"

After that, of course, romance was at an end for the evening; and as Bessie did not see Maurice for several days afterwards, her resolution had time to cool. She was glad she had not spoken.

She wanted him to know, oh! very, very much! but, at the same time, it seemed to her more fitting that the knowledge should come to him some other way.

"Did you know that the Duke of Barminster is going to be married?" he asked, abruptly, one morning when he came in and found her very busy writing letters.

He was accustomed to come to the house at all hours.

The Duke of Barminster was the nobleman to whom allusion has already been made as the unsuccessful suitor of Miss Delapierre.

"Yes," she answered, quietly, "to Lady Violet Sandford. I am very glad," she added, as though to put the question of her feelings in the matter beyond dispute.

"Well, if you are pleased, I suppose there's nobody with a greater right to say so," he answered, rather gloomily. "But still it seems rather a pity—if you'll excuse my saying so. The title of Duchess would have suited you admirably, Miss Delapierre."

"I trust I should have done nothing to disgrace it," she answered, with quiet dignity. "But, in declining it, I acted according to the dictates of my conscience; and I have never regretted it."

"Still, I think it was a pity. The Duke's a good fellow, and would have made a kind husband. Besides, if you had married him, think how much influence you might have had; what good you could have done; how many deserving people you might have helped——"

He broke off abruptly, not quite liking to add—"how you might have assisted me to push my fortunes," which was the real thought in his mind.

He had often reflected how useful Bessie might have been to him if she had not been blind to her own interests.

A beautiful young Duchess would have been able to compass many things which an actress could not.

Her influence could easily have procured him some Colonial governorship or desirable diplomatic mission.

"I could never marry for mere position alone, Mr. Carrington. That would have been fair neither to the Duke nor to myself."

"Ah, I forgot!" he answered, rather sarcastically. "You are still cherishing that romantic attachment to some unknown hero you told me of the other day—the man you fell in love with when you were only fifteen—wasn't it?—and have never forgotten since. Of course, you ought to know your own business best; but it looks rather as if you had thrown away the substance for the shadow."

His cynical tone jarred upon her strangely—it was not like Maurice.

"I don't think you can quite judge for me in this matter, Mr. Carrington. I am very glad that the Duke is going to marry Lady Violet. She is a charming girl, and I wish him every happiness."

Clearly, there was nothing more to be said.

If Maurice had come with a half-formed intention of endeavoring to bring Miss Delapierre to the sense of her own folly, and induce her to try and win back the Duke before it was too late, he was obliged to relinquish it.

He chatted about other things for a few minutes, and then went his way.

But Bessie wrote no more letters that morning.

For a long time she sat leaning her head on her hand, trying to reconcile the Maurice who would have had her marry a man she did not love, for the sake of his position, with the Maurice of her dreams. She had never yet been able to see him as he really was.

To her indulgent eyes he was still the radiant, dazzling vision he had been that first day in the lane; still her youthful hero, with no taint of the earth about him.

He could not easily be shaken on his pedestal, or she would certainly have thought it odd that he should speak as he had spoken that morning, if he had really had a particle of affection for her.

There was a strangely innocent unworldliness in Bessie, despite her stage training, which rendered her an easy dupe where her feelings were concerned; and soon she was willing to persuade herself that Maurice had only given her another proof of his unselfishness.

He wished her to marry the Duke because he himself was a poor man, too noble to drag the woman he loved into poverty.

"But why does he not ask me? Have I not money enough for both?" she impatiently thought.

Her expenditure was necessarily large; and the debts she had paid for Maurice, without his knowledge, were considerable. Latterly, also, she had once or twice advanced him money.

He made no secret of the desperate state of his finances; and though he had never asked her in so many words for a loan, yet, when she had offered it to him, he had allowed her persuasions to overcome his scruples and induce him to accept it.

The impression their last interview left on her mind was all the deeper because he did nothing to efface it.

Days passed, and he did not come. Mrs. Melhuish wondered why not, and imagined he must be ill.

At last Bessie sat down and wrote to him, playfully reproaching him for his absence, and requesting him, if not previously engaged, to come and dine with them the next evening.

The next morning she looked eagerly among her batch of letters for Maurice's well-known handwriting; and eagerly swooped upon one he had addressed to Miss Delapierre.

It struck her as a trifle odd, when she opened it, to find that it began "My dear Adela" the very name of the heroine she was playing at the theatre, and she thought it possible that he might have given her her stage designation for a joke. She had read the first page before it began to dawn upon her that it was not intended for her at all, but for Maurice's sister, Mrs. Sebright, whose name she knew was also Adela.

She would not have been a woman if she had not read to the end, when the words "Miss Delapierre" caught her eye. She saw that Maurice had evidently slipped it into the wrong envelope by mistake.

"My dear Adela,—I am awfully sorry I haven't been to see you lately; but I've been so busy that I've not had time. Soon I hope to be my own master, and then I can do as I like. But I've made good use of my time, as you'll say, when I tell you my news.

"First, though, let me ask what put the absurd notion, that I am going to marry the actress, Miss Delapierre, into your head? I assure you I never had any such intention. I own I have cultivated her society; but it was because I saw she might be useful to me, and so she has, in many ways.

"It was she who got me my present post. But there has never been any real feeling on my side, although I believe she takes a kind of sentimental interest in me, on account of having known me, years ago, at Graybourne. Her uncle was old Peters, at the mill.

"But I should never care to marry an actress; and, besides, Miss Delapierre is not rich enough for me. I know her financial position thoroughly. And this brings me to my news. I am engaged to Mrs. Rosenheim, the widow of old Rosenheim the Viennese banker; and we're to be married in three months. It was only settled yesterday, and you may tell all your friends. She is fat, I grant, and she'll never see forty again; but I've outlived romance, and she has half-a-million of money. Only think of that!

"So, if you should hear any more of the nonsense about Miss Delapierre, please contradict it, as the report might get round to Matilda's ears—her name is Matilda—and cause some unpleasantness.

"Your affectionate brother,

"MAURICE CARRINGTON."

"It was the saddest thing I ever heard," remarked our old friend the Roman-nosed dowager, to a select coterie of her cronies, next day. "Everybody noticed when Miss Delapierre came on the stage last night, that she looked very odd and unlike herself. Instead of beginning her part, she went and stood near the footlights, looking down at the audience with a smile which people who saw it tell me was enough to make your flesh creep. 'Let me give you a little bit of Tennyson—a little bit of Tennyson,' she kept repeating, until, suddenly, she put her hand to her head, with an awful scream, 'I've forgotten the words! I've forgotten the words! Oh, for the love of heaven, tell me the words!' By that time they had the sense to ring the curtain down, and she was taken home; but they say there's very little hope that she'll ever recover her senses again. She does nothing but implore everybody to 'tell her the words.'"

"Poor thing! What little bit of Tennyson was it?" inquired a sympathizing matron.

"I don't know," said the Roman-nosed dowager.

She had quite forgotten that evening at Lady Caroline's. As a rule, people only have very short memories in Mayfair.

[THE END.]

MR. JASON—Here's a little bit of advice in the paper you ought to hear, Maria: "The woman that remembers that her husband is only a human being and not a demi-god will find her path through life much smoother for doing so." Mrs. Jason—I do try to think you are human, Jehiel, but it is pretty hard for me to believe it sometimes from the way you carry on.

Scientific and Useful.

BOILER TUBES.—Seamless boiler tubes are now made from solid ingots of metal by a process that twists and stretches the fibres and it is said to make a tube much stronger than the ordinary ones.

CORN HUSKER.—A western inventor, it is said, has devised a steel corn husker, which, drawn by a team, picks and husks the corn at the rate of eight to twelve acres a day, according to the capacity of the team.

GLASS-CUTTING.—To cut a glass jar in two, file a slight notch on the side, hold a red-hot poker against the notch, and move the poker back and forth until a crack is started; you can lead it in any direction by moving the poker, which must be heated anew from time to time.

FOR SNAKES.—A report comes by way of Germany that a novel use of electricity has been made in India, for the prevention of the intrusion of snakes into dwellings. Before all the doors and around the house two wires are laid, connected with an induction apparatus. Should a snake attempt to crawl over the wires, he receives a shock of electricity.

GARMENTS.—Fur garments are cleaned and renovated in Russia, the country of furs, in this way: Some rye-flour is put into a pot and heated upon a stove, with constant stirring as long as the hand can bear the heat. The flour is then spread over the fur and rubbed into it. After this the fur is brushed with a very clean brush, or, better is gently beaten until all the flour is removed. The fur thus resumes its natural lustre, and appears as if new.

WORKED BY PETROLEUM.—A novel vessel has recently been constructed. It contains a boiler and engine at the stern of the boat, but the method by which this boiler is heated is entirely novel. The fuel is kerosene, which is vaporised by means of heat in a coiled tube, and is then driven out into the furnace and mixed with air. This mixed vapor will burn, it is said, without any smoke or smell, and without any fouling of the boiler tubes. Steam can be got up to working-pressure in three or four minutes, a circumstance which alone is very favorable to this type of vessels.

BARE FEET.—Children, says a high medical authority who are allowed to go barefooted enjoy almost perfect immunity from the danger of "cold" by accidental chilling of the feet, and they are altogether healthier and happier than those who, in obedience to the usage of social life, are invalided and, so to say, swathed and put away in rigid cases. As regards to the poorer classes of children, there can be no sort of doubt in the mind of any one that it is incomparably better they should go barefooted than wear boots that let in the wet, and stockings that are nearly always damp and foul.

Farm and Garden.

USEFUL TO THE FARM.—The themometer and the barometer should be used by all farmers. After having used them for a time they will be considered indispensable adjuncts to the farm.

WEEDS.—Many weeds can be utilized with advantage. Purslain is highly relished by pigs, and the same is true of plantain. Rag weed and pig weed will also be eaten. If the hogs are made to consume these plants the labor of eradicating them will cost but very little, as they can be converted into pork. There is no plant that grows more highly relished by the hog than pig weed. Young crab grass is also accepted.

MILDEW.—Take three pounds each of flowers of sulphur and quick-lime. Slack the lime and boil with the sulphur in six gallons of water until reduced to two gallons. Allow this to settle, then pour off the clear liquid and bottle for use. An old iron pot will answer to boil it in. A gill of this liquid, mixed with five gallons of water, is an excellent prevention and cure for mildew upon plants—showered upon them as soon as the mildew appears.

PLOWING.—Late fall plowing turns up the insects that have buried themselves and exposes them to the cold. Should any more weed seeds remain, from being deep in the soil, they will also be brought to the surface, sprout in the spring plowing. Consideration will convince them that there will, however, be less work to do fighting weeds the next season, and the succeeding year will find fewer plowings necessary and the number of weeds greatly reduced. With the method practiced of leaving the stubble land unplowed until fall or spring the weeds and insects are protected, more labor required, and the following crops robbed of moisture and plant food.

HORSES.—Never wash a horse with cold water when he is heated. On the farm dispense with shoes, unless the land is very rocky. Feed your horses regularly three times daily, but never over-feed. Water before feeding, but not while the horse is hot from work. Use the whip very little, and never when the animal shies or stumbles. Never leave a horse standing unhitched. It is the way to make them runaways. Do not storm and fret. Be quiet and kind, and the horse will be so, too, in most cases. Give the horse a large stall and a good bed at night. It is important that he lie down to rest. If a horse is vicious and unmanageable at your business, sell it to some one that can control him. Hay or other ground feed is indispensable, and ground corn or hominy is better than whole corn.

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Real Progress.

Real progress must not consist in the undue development of a single power or faculty, to the prejudice of other sides or capacities of man's complex being. On the contrary, it seems to be exactly coextensive with the growth of his mind.

Only inform, exercise, strengthen, sharpen, widen, unfold, develop the human intellect, and the human intellect will become the instrument of a true and necessary progress.

And yet we may perceive that a pure intellectualism is apt to fall short even of the lower measures of duty. When it is unbalanced by a warm heart and a vigorous will, the mere cultivation of mind makes a man alternately selfish and weak.

Selfish, if, for instance, to the prosecution of a private speculation or to the assertion of a private theory, the faith, the moral vigor, the broadest and highest interests of others are sacrificed or postponed.

Weak, when the entire man is cultivated intellect and nothing else, neither love nor resolution; when the clearness of intellectual perception contrasts grimly with the absence of any practical effort; when mental development, instead of being the crowning grace of a noble character, is but as an unseemly and unproductive fungus, that has drained out to no purpose the life and strength of its parent soul.

Instead of protecting and illustrating that Truth which really nerves the will for action, intellect has too often amused itself with pulverizing all fixed convictions.

It has persuaded itself that it can dispense with those high motives, without which it is itself too cold and incorporeal a thing to be of practical service in this human world.

It has learnt to rejoice in its own selfish if not aimless energy; but it really has abandoned the highest work of which it was capable; it has left to an unintellectual enthusiasm, to men of much love, if of interior mental cultivation, the task of stimulating and guiding the true progress of mankind.

Can any theory of human progress dare to claim our attention, which, while not venturing to reject the tremendous truths of immortality, of an eternity beyond the grave, of an eternal heaven and an eternal hell, yet does in practice proceed as if they were uncertain or improbable?

What a poor, what a narrow, what an unworthy conception of man's capacity for progress, is that which sees no horizon beyond the tomb!

In what terms would you yourselves stigmatize a plan of education which should treat a pupil if he were to be always a child, and as if there were no need of anticipating the powers and the opportunities, or for guarding him against the dangers of his coming manhood?

Yet surely this error is trivial when compared to theirs, whose sense—through intellect alone—of the mighty future is so feeble or so false that they would deal with an undying being as if he were more short-lived than many of the perishing beasts and trees, amid which he prepares himself for his illimitable destiny.

Progress, in the sense of acquisition, is something; but progress in the sense of being is a great deal more.

To grow higher, deeper, wider as the years go on; to conquer difficulties, and acquire more and more power; to feel all one's faculties unfolding, and truth descending into the soul—this makes life worth living.

There is perhaps no truer sign that a man is really advancing than that he is learning to forget himself, that he is losing the natural thoughts about self in the thought of One higher than himself, to whose guidance he can commit himself and all men.

IT is astonishing how many people there are who neglect punctuality. Thousands have failed in life from this cause alone. It is not only a serious vice in itself, but it is the fruitful parent of numerous other vices, so that he who becomes the victim of it gets involved in toils from which it is almost impossible to escape. It makes the merchant wasteful of time, it saps the business reputation of the lawyer, and it injures the prospects of the mechanic, who might otherwise rise to fortune—in a word, there is not a profession or a station in life which is not liable to the canker of this destructive habit.

THE man or woman who works deliberately accomplishes the most. The deliberate worker is the thoughtful worker, with whom the habit of system and regularity has become second nature. Any one may cultivate it who will take the trouble to try—no great effort is required; and the most unsystematic spasmodic worker will realize with amazement how easy it is to get through an allotted task in half the time it formerly required by planning it all out before entering the office, workshop, or kitchen.

IN solitude the mind gains strength, and learns to lean upon herself; in the world it seeks or accepts of a few treacherous supports,—the feigned compassion of one, the flattery of a second, the civilities of a third, the friendship of a fourth; they all deceive, and bring the mind back to retirement, reflection and books.

ALL the world, all that we are, and all that we have, our bodies and our souls, our actions and our sufferings, our conditions at home, our accidents abroad, our many sins, and our seldom virtues, are as so many arguments to make our souls dwell low in the deep valley of humility.

ALL which happens in the whole world happens through hope. No husbandman would sow a grain of corn if he did not hope it would spring up and bring forth the ear. How much more are we helped on by hope in the way to eternal life!

HUMILITY is a virtue that all preach, none practice, and yet everybody is content to hear. The master thinks it is a good doctrine for his servant, the laity for the clergy, and the clergy for the laity.

IT is easier to meet with error than to find truth; error is on the surface and can be more easily met with; truth is hid in the great depth, the way to seek does not appear to all the world.

ALAS, we make a ladder of our thoughts, where angels step, but sleep ourselves at the foot; our high resolves look down upon our slumbering acts.

AS I approach the fog it seems at some little distance to be almost solid gloom, such as would shut out every glimpse of light and totally imprison me in obscurity. But when I enter it I find myself agreeably mistaken, and the mist much thinner than it appeared. Such is the case respecting the sufferings of life; they are not, when experienced, so dreadful as a timorous imagination surmised.

WE hear and speak much now of the evils of over pressure, the dangers of undue excitement. We forget that mental stagnation is also evil, that intellectual inanition may carry in its train consequences even more prejudicial than over-stimulation, and that the due exercise of the faculties is as essential to their strength and activity as rest.

SOCIETY everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better security of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion.

AS the rose-tree is composed of the sweetest flowers and the sharpest thorns,—as the heavens are sometimes overcast, alternately tempestuous and serene; so is the life of man intermingled with hopes and fears, with joy and sorrows, with pleasure and with pains.

IT is when the heart is warm with affection that the tokens of love are most precious—when enthusiasm burns that the deeds it inspires are most serviceable. A good done quickly is twice done; a seasonable service is doubled in value.

THE history of any private family, however humble, could it be fully related for five or six generations, would illustrate the state and progress of society better than the most elaborate dissertation.

WHATEVER you do, do it well. The slighting of a task because it is apparently unimportant leads to habitual neglect, so that men and women degenerate insensibly into bad workers.

MEN and statues that are admired in an elevated situation have a very different effect upon us when we approach them; the first appear less than we imagined them, the last bigger.

THE good often sigh more over little faults than the wicked over great. Hence an old proverb, that the stain appears greater according to the brilliancy of what it touches.

THE conservative may clamor against reform, but he might as well clamor against the centrifugal force. He sighs for the "good old times,"—he might as well wish the oak back into the acorn.

HABIT and imitation—there is nothing more perennial in us than these two. They are the source of all working and apprenticeship, of all practice, and all learning in this world.

WHEN a man dies they who survive him ask what property he has left behind. The angel who bends over the dying man asks what good deeds he has sent before him.

THE true Christian is like the sun, which pursues its noiseless track and everywhere leaves the effect of its beams in blessing upon the world around him.

CRUEL men are the greatest lovers of mercy, avaricious men of generosity, and proud men of humility; that is to say, in others, not in themselves.

MEEKNESS and courtesy will always recommend the first address, but soon pall and nauseate unless they are associated with more sterling qualities.

HUMILITY is the first lesson we learn from reflection; and self-distrust the first proof we give of having obtained a knowledge of ourselves.

HOPE is like the wing of an angel, soaring up to heaven, and bearing our prayers to the throne of God.

The World's Happenings.

Boston has two women real estate agents.

Texas has never had a native-born Governor.

Some Detroit ladies have formed a club for the study of the art of conversation.

The spectacle of a steamer running to a fire actually frightened a Milwaukee cow to death.

The schools in the town of Starks, Me., have been closed owing to the prevalence of measles.

Two friends met on the streets of Waterbury, Conn., a few days ago for the first time in 70 years.

The newest style of coffee-pot has a little steam whistle attached, which warns folks when the coffee is ready.

The editor of a Fort Ogden, Fla., paper asserts that a bamboo sprout near his well grew five inches in one night.

The Bishop of Chester, England, commends boxing. In fact, he is a boxer himself. He also bestrides the steed of steel.

In the Sydney Courts it has been decided that no Sunday newspaper can sue for advertisements, the contract being illegal.

A few property owners in Philadelphia allow tenants a discount of 5 per cent. for paying their rents on the day they fall due.

A railroad car inspector in Massachusetts found a bird's nest containing three eggs on the truss girt of a car that had just finished a run.

In the United States every year 2700 brakemen are killed and 20,000 crippled. Railroading in peace is as dangerous as soldiering in time of war.

A dozen boys, rendered insane by excessive cigarette smoking, have been admitted to the Napa, Cal., Hospital for the Insane within a short time.

Cigarettes of tea, lately introduced in England, have been followed by those made of a mixture of herbs, which seem to be received with favor.

Europe will cost America about $50,000,000 this year. That is a moderate estimate of the amount that 100,000 Americans will "drop" in the old country.

An unknown philanthropist in New York city proposes to pay the college expenses of 12 boys chosen yearly by competitive examination from the public schools.

At the launch of a schooner at Wilmington recently the bottle-breaking custom was given the go-by. The daughter of the builder showered the bow with white and red roses.

A Portland, Maine, business man lost a $20 gold coin on his way to work a few days ago, and, returning at night, found the same piece on the pavement, where it had remained unnoticed all day.

The Canadian Legislature has struck a vein of economy. It has discharged a chaplain whose salary is $400 a year, but resolutely maintains its dignity by retaining an usher of the Black Rod at $1350.

The "penny in the slot" machine must have reached its culmination in that invented by an Englishman, which, after the prescribed rule had been complied with, will take your photograph, finish it and drop it out already framed.

William H. Campbell, an old-fashioned Democrat, who has been postmaster in a Vermont town for four years, has just stepped out, and his wife, a "staunch Republican," has been given the commission, while William becomes assistant postmaster.

A Madison, Me., woman was aroused while sleeping on a lounge recently, by a pet cat, which drew a large adder across her neck. She threw the adder to the floor, where it showed fight and kept her a prisoner till a neighbor came and released her.

Eight years ago John P. Davis, of New London, Conn., had $21 picked from his pocket. Recently he received a letter containing the amount and a note which explained that the money was that stolen from him in 1881. The note had neither date nor signature.

A young Pittsburger actually attempted to pawn a horse, asking a loan of $1 on it. The pawnbroker, instead of making the advance, notified the police, and the "customer" was taken in custody, being unable to give a satisfactory explanation as to how he came into possession of the animal.

Rhode Island fishermen are unhappy, and the glutted condition of the market is the cause. At a recent meeting one of them reported that he made only $25 out of a 4,000-barrel catch. Another, who sent two barrels, each containing 210 pounds of fish, to this city, received in return, by mail, two silver quarters and a dime.

A Jasper, Ga., jury has just awarded Stephen Kirby $5 for the loss of a pig's foot. A locomotive had cut it off. The defendant was the Marietta and North Georgia Railroad Company. There was a great deal of fun over the case. The defendant's counsel contended in a 3-hours fight that the pig's foot had a market value of 5 cents.

Some Maine lumbermen, who were annoyed by a bear stealing their molasses out of the camp store-room, recently put up a job on brute. They got an empty molasses keg, filled the sides of it full of sharp-pointed nails, inclined toward the bottom, poured a little molasses into it, and set the whole arrangement out in the bushes. The next morning it was found some distance from the camp. The bear was inside and couldn't escape.

A curious instance of barbarism is reported from Hunkanli Torkard, a village near Sheffield, Eng. It is stated that a member of the Salvation Army there sold his wife. A friend of his had evinced an affection for the woman, and the husband expressed his willingness to part with her for a slight consideration. The sum of one shilling was offered and accepted, and the husband subsequently put a halter round his wife's neck and led her to the house of the purchaser. The affair caused no little excitement in the district.

NIGHT.

BY SUSIE M. BEST.

The sun like a fiery ball droops low,
  Droops low on the sullen west;
Up from the Orient, stately and slow,
  Sweeps Night, with bediamonded breast!

Following fast in her shadowy train
  The brilliant hosts are gleaming;
Arcturus, Regulus, and Charles' Wain
  Out of the mists are beaming.

Swimming in silvery, silent light,
  Circled by halo tender,
Her mellow moon puts darkness to flight
  And crowns her the queen of splendor.

Beautiful Night, loved daughter of quiet,
  Grant us thy blessing, we pray;
Soothe from our souls all passionate riot,
  Strike it as dead as the day.

My Hero.

BY E. W. P.

HE was called Captain Armer, and was one of the handsomest, bravest, and best of men—that is, in my opinion, or he would scarcely have been my hero.

When I saw him first he was twenty-four and I ten. I can recollect all as clearly as if it had been yesterday, and remember distinctly the morning upon which I seemed first to hear his name. It came about in this wise.

I was seated on a thick mat in the breakfast-room window playing with the terrier Perker; my father, and mother, and two brothers, much my elders, were yet at table.

The sun shone in gloriously, and I was revelling in it with my canine pet, when my brother Harry exclaimed:

"By Jove! Louis Armer is a fine fellow! Listen to this, pater."

Then he began to read from the newspaper.

It was the period of the fearful Indian rebellion—the time of Delhi and Cawnpore—and the account Harry read was how Captain Armer, at the risk of his own life, had been the means of saving many women and children from horrible massacre—and worse.

There is no need to recount the gallant deed; suffice that it held even me, child as I was, spellbound. I ceased to play with Perker, and listened with all ears.

The deed of self-sacrifice and daring had struck the chord of hero-worship in my heart, and from that moment Captain Armer was my hero; my child-nature, pure and innocent, thrilled at his name.

Soon, from the talk which ensued, I learned that he was in some way a distant connection, but that between his family and ours, there had been an old quarrel that had kept them apart.

Now, however, that had all been set aright, amity restored, and Louis Armer, invalided home, was to visit Forestside.

How I longed to see him—how of nights I laid awake and tried to imagine what he was like—and how impatient I was for the day on which he was to arrive!

I heard he was to be at Forestside at luncheon, so, when the morning came, escaping from the house, I ran down to the avenue—a fine double row of beeches, with rhododendrons at their base—and waited his arrival, peering through the bushes.

I was a slender child, somewhat tiny for my age, with golden-brown hair, or rather brown gold, with small delicate features, like my mother, and large gray eyes; I was thought pretty, gentle—I could never have been handsome.

I can recollect perfectly how my pulses throbbed with impatience for his coming, and how my heart leaped when at last I caught the sound of hoofs on the road. Soon I knew the horse had entered the lodge-gates—that it was he.

In a few seconds he was advancing up the avenue—that is, I supposed it was he, but I was aware of a disappointment.

I had, child like, pictured him always in the handsome uniform of the—Dragoons, and when I beheld a tall handsome man in morning-dress I began to doubt whether it could be my hero.

Owing to that doubt I forgot my intention to see and not be seen, and was suddenly made conscious of the fact by Captain Armer reining in his horse, and smiling as his eyes met mine.

"What pretty little wood-nymph is this?" he asked, smiling; then, as I stepped forth, added, throwing himself out of his saddle, "I can guess by the likeness. You must be Geraldine Fosbrooke."

"Yes," I replied, all of a quiver of excitement, as I placed both my hands in the one he had extended, and raised my eyes to his, "and you are Captain Armer, who saved those poor ladies and little children? Oh! how good and brave of you!"

I felt my lips tremble with excitable emotion, and my eyes grew moist; I can remember the look he gave me before, bending, he kissed my forehead, saying:

"Thank you! That is the sweetest praise I have yet received."

That kiss seemed to penetrate to my heart, and there be enshrined; no kiss had ever been like that one to me. It made me proud and happy; I never forgot it—I never shall.

From that moment I loved Captain Armer, my hero, with a child's pure affection.

After that visit, and for the next six years, Captain Armer was constantly at Forestside; we took him to our arms indeed, rather as a close relation than merely a connection.

Before the last year two things happened; Louis Armer was promoted to a colonelcy, having first been a major, and our cousin Cecile came to stay with us.

Cecile was twenty-three, and exceedingly handsome. Tall, her figure was well developed, graceful, and she walked like a duchess. Her complexion was fair, her features of the Grecian type. The short upper lip carried on it an air of pride and scorn which Cecile possibly did not intend. Her eyes were blue, clear, liquid, with a peculiarly attractive fascination about them.

We all liked her; thought her handsome—who could have done other! But I think it's a bad thing for a girl to be regarded as Cecile was. Adulation becomes as necessary to them as sunshine to flowers—they wither without it. Obtaining it in large quantities, I believe it blunts their feelings for others.

Cecile was twenty-three, and had refused no end of offers. I was scarcely sixteen, and two years were to elapse before I came out. Hence Cecile patronized me, and regarded me, at least treated me, still as a school girl. I did not mind, except when Colonel Armer was present.

Then the color of annoyance would spring into my cheek, when Cecile would laugh, with an amused glance in her eyes—and kissing me as if to make it up, whisper:

"You foolish child."

I did not know she had a deeper meaning than the words implied; I discovered it later.

War broke out again, and Colonel Armer was ordered on active service. I was proud yet sorry because of the danger he would run. He came down to Forestside to say good-bye. He stayed one night, and started next morning.

We all went to the lodge to see him off. I cannot tell when I had felt so wretched. I thought of the peril he would have to encounter. How that it was possible we might never—never see him again. That one morning, in the list of dead, we might read his name.

Leaving the rest, fearful of betraying the feelings I did not myself understand, I went into the shrubbery, threw myself upon a seat there, and leaned my face on my hands, the tears rising to my eyes.

I was aroused by someone sitting down by my side. It was Cecile.

"You foolish child," she smiled. "Certainly you have begun early."

I felt the blood rush hot over my face, as I exclaimed, shortly:

"What do you mean, Cecile?"

"Don't you know?" and that short lip seemed shorter still. "My dear, remember you are but a child—not quite sixteen. I'll keep your secret."

"I have no secret," I replied, quietly. "Cecile, it is you who are foolish. I am sorry that Colonel Armer has gone—very sorry, for he may never return. He may be killed."

"Heaven forbid!" she broke in.

"So say I. But it might be—and I like him; he is as dear to me as a brother."

She took my hands and looked steadily in my face, then said:

"Forgive me, Geraldine. Yes, it is I who am foolish. But it seemed absurdly precocious." She began to laugh, then checked herself. "Like him, dear, not as a brother—but as a cousin. Shall I tell you my secret?"

She was, I felt, watching me keenly, at that moment I scarcely knew why. After, she went on:

"Geraldine, Louis has asked me to be his wife. We are to be married on his return. What do you say to this?"

I experienced a sensation as if a cold wave had passed over me; Cecile had read my secret better than I had myself. My love for Louis I thought was but the veneration of courage and worth. He was all in all to me, but I had never thought of him as Cecile imagined. I had too little opinion of myself. That Colonel Armer should wed one as beautiful as my cousin appeared natural, and I replied promptly:

"What should I say, Cecile, but that I pray he will return."

"Thank you!" She stooped and kissed me—then she looked at me again. Then she laughed—then said: "Dine, you're a riddle. But you're a dear, good girl. There, let us go to the house."

The conversation bore fruit, however. Thinking over it, with suddenly flaming cheeks and beating heart, I understood what Cecile had meant; and pondering more, with this new strong light thrown into my life, I knew she had read the truth before I had, and that I loved Colonel Armer, my hero, as I could never love another. Yet it seemed so natural that he should be enamored of, and marry one as beautiful as Cecile, that I never felt jealousy.

"May she love him as I would," I only reflected. "May she make him happy."

Before Louis Armer's return I began to doubt that. I blamed myself for being unjust. Yet Cecile appeared to think so much of herself in that coming future, so little of him.

Well, I will not dwell on this. Colonel Armer returned, and they were married. Married from Forestside. My secret, revealed to myself now, I kept well under control; and as I played the part of chief bridesmaid, not even Cecile could have guessed how I envied her.

She looked very handsome and very happy as she drove away, a proud light in her husband's eyes as he sat by her side: But the words would keep ringing in my ears:

"She does not love him as I would. She is not to blame. It is not in her nature."

Instead of at once returning to the drawing-room I went up to my own room. I wished to be alone awhile. Passing that which had been Cecile's, I glanced in. All was in confusion, and in the grate a pile of old letters and other useless papers.

Suddenly something in the heap caught my attention. Approaching quickly, I seized it. Yes, I was right. It was a photo of Louis Armer—one he had sent her during his absence. It was not well executed, yet the likeness was excellent. Cecile had better ones, so she had cast it away. I could not have done so. Bad or good, it was still his likeness.

It was mine now, and I carried it to my own room. I had some skill in water-colors, and ascertaining the process of coloring photos, in secret I painted that of Colonel Armer. Merely a medallion of the head and shoulders. I expended every care on it. It was a success. I had a shut locket which it fitted, then I put it away for a present for Cecile. I would have liked to retain it, but I dared not.

Yet it never left my possession. Circumstances occurred which prevented us and the Armers soon meeting. We heard a daughter had been born to them. Then, scarcely a year later, rumors reached us that there was some trouble between Louis and Cecile. Her fondness for gaiety had developed into a passion.

She was here, there, everywhere. There were disagreements, and then—I don't know how it all came about, but the terrible news arrived that Cecile had left her home—had fled with another.

There was a divorce of course. The child was sent, by our request, to Forestside, and Colonel Armer went abroad. It was after that, that one day, coming upon the locket in my drawer, I suspended it round my neck under my dress. I dared to wear it now, though I knew Louis Armer could never be anything to me.

Two years elapsed. The Colonel was still abroad. He had been once to Forestside, when his child, to whom he was passionately devoted, was dangerously ill, and we were all painfully struck by the change in him. His expression was grave, careworn. He was aged ten years.

We all knew he would never, never wed again. And this was Cecile's doings. How I hated her! for Colonel Armer was still my hero; still I loved him. I had received one or two eligible offers, but had refused them. Each year of my life strengthened my knowledge that I could never love but him.

But let me hasten on.

One night I was startled from my sleep by a vague sense of terror. I sat up and looked around. All was still. I must have imagined some alarm in a dream.

I was about to lie down again when a piercing shriek sounded from the floor above, followed by the awful, soul-chilling words:

"Fire! Help!—help! Fire!"

In a second I was on my feet; in another I had thrown my dressing-gown around me, and ran into the corridor towards the upper stairs, when, down them, her hair streaming, her eyes wild with fright, came flying Ellison, the little Nina's maid.

"What is it?" I cried. "Speak. Where is the fire?"

"In the room. It's all ablaze!" she shrieked. "Oh, help, help!"

"Where," I exclaimed, "is the child?"

She stared like one distraught upon me; then, flinging her hands up to her head, cried:

"The child! I forgot her! She's in the room. Help, help!" and wailing as one insane, she dropped in a heap at my feet.

By this time the house was getting aroused, but I did not wait. I sprang upstairs. I had but one thought: I must save the child, for Louis Armer's sake.

I loved the little Nina; but at that moment I only thought of the father.

"If she die it will kill him!" I murmured, beneath my breath; and I would have laid down my life there and then for Louis, or to save him pain.

Nevertheless, as I reached the door of the door from which the maid had fled, leaving her poor little charge behind, I stood appalled. The door was wide open, and in its place was a rolling sheet of flame and smoke. To reach Nina I must pass through it.

The servants were now rushing down the passage screaming. I cried:

"Help! Miss Nina is in there!"

Not one attempted to enter. They drew back in horror.

Just then the child's cry rang through the place. It struck on my heart.

"For Louis!—for my hero!" I thought. "It is but what he would do."

I dashed through the flames.

Thank heaven, they swept round the room, so that it was clearer in the centre, though the heat was fearful. In my excitement I did not feel it; I was unaware my hair was singed. I saw but the terrified child, shrinking in horror from the flames, which were rushing up the curtains of its cot.

Swiftly I seized her in my arms, and turned to fly.

Oh, heaven! the awfulness of that moment! Where was the door?

In that fierce glare, rolling smoke, stifling heat, which seemed to crack my eyeballs, I could not see!

"Speak!" I screamed. "Someone speak! Where is the door?"

Before the words were beyond my lips, my father's voice had caught my ear; it came from the other side of that furnace of flame. I clasped the child to my breast and dashed through. The flames curled round me for a moment, then I seemed to have sprung beyond them and fallen.

I did not know—I knew nothing until I appeared to wake out of a long sleep—to learn what? That I had saved Nina, that I had been much burnt, and that I was blind.

I cannot describe the first agony of that knowledge, so will not attempt it. To believe that Heaven's beautiful earth and sunlight are shut from you for ever—the faces of your fellow-men, the countenances of those you love, are never again to be beheld by you—causes the deepest depth of despair. But I had, when the first paroxysm was over, two consolations:

There was hope my sight might be restored, and what I had done, what I was suffering, was for my hero's sake.

Colonel Armer, on hearing what had happened, got leave as speedily as he was able. The first place he came to was Forestside.

I was but convalescent when he arrived, and was seated in the morning room by the window. I heard the beat of his horse's hoofs up the avenue, and it recalled to me the time when, ten years old, I had hidden among the rhododendrons to catch the first sight of him. I might hear him now, listen to his voice, but I could see him no longer.

My head dropped on my bosom, tears sprang to my eyes, created by the bitterness of the thought, but I pressed my hand to my breast, beneath which I could feel the locket, and reflected:

"It was for his sake."

Then my heart began to beat, the door had opened; there was a footstep crossing the room, I knew it was his. An instant after his hands were clasping mine, he was bending over me, his full, deep tones, broken by emotion, were in my ear.

"Oh! Geraldine, what can I say—what do? My poor—poor Geraldine! What do I owe you? How can I ever repay so great a debt? My Nina—my darling!—you preserved her for me, but, merciful Heaven, at what a price! What can I say? My heart is rent with joy and

pain! My brave Geraldine! Oh! that you should suffer for so noble a deed!"

He was kneeling now, kissing my hands, sobbing as men alone can sob. My whole being was filled with a happiness unspeakable.

I needed not eyes to see him. Ah! I no longer deplored my affliction.

"Why should you, who could risk death to save strange women and children," I smiled, "wonder that I could risk sight to rescue one I loved? Please say no more. Do not grieve for me. I am happy, indeed—indeed I am. I do not mourn."

It was truth; no being on earth was happier than I at that moment; I felt over and above repaid for all I had suffered.

Colonel Armer was to remain at Forest side six weeks. During that time I needed not eyes; he seemed to watch and anticipate my desires.

Only once did he refer to his unhappy marriage. Cecile had married and was living abroad—not, it was whispered, happily.

But Colonel Armer would never marry again—we all knew that, and felt no wonder—and somehow this seemed to give me a right to love him, to rob the doing so of all blame, for it was a love pure as veneration, and I hoarded my locket as an almost priceless treasure.

I could not see it, but I liked to hold it in my hand, to open it, and touch the glass guarding the features; there seemed some subtle essence that passed from it to me.

The six weeks' leave grew to a close, and Louis Armer must again depart. Then a sorrow came upon me I found it hard to hide; but I did—for very shame I did.

The days were now bright and warm, and I used of mornings when alone to feel my way down the hawthorn path to a small arbor, where, when I had sight, I used to sit and study, read or work; now I could but sit there with idle hands and think.

It was the last day Louis Armer was to be with us; on the morrow he was again to quit England.

After breakfast he had ridden over to the rectory to say farewell, and I felt my way to the arbor; no one ever disturbed me there, and I could sit and think.

Think! Of what could I think but Louis Armer's departure?

I was vexed with myself at my weakness, and resolved to get over it there alone.

I took the locket from my dress, holding it open in my hand, and fell into a reverie. Suddenly I found tears upon my cheek.

Placing the locket on the small gipsy table, I covered my hands over my face, or intended to do so, but catching them against the edge of the table—a light affair—it overturned, and the locket was flung forward on to the ground, a small matter to those who had sight—but what to those that were deprived of that blessing?

A thrill passed through me of alarm, of terror.

It was my secret; it was open. Suppose I could not find it, I dared ask no one to do so for me! But suppose someone else should see it?

My cheeks burned hot at the thought. Hastily righting the table, I dropped on my knees and commenced my search, passing my hand over the turf, for here it was all trim-mown grass. In vain.

Again and again I returned to the starting-point—the table—but I could not find what I sought. I was excited, nervous, frightened, and that no doubt hindered me.

Abruptly I stopped, listening.

I fancied I heard a footfall on the grass; I listened eagerly, in alarm.

There was no sound. I had evidently been mistaken.

"Oh, where is it?—where is it?" I murmured, in distress, as I recommenced my search, this time with success.

My hand touched the locket. I seized it with a cry of delight, returned it to its hiding-place, then felt my way back to the house.

I was seated in my old seat by the window when Colonel Armer returned, half an hour later, and came in to me.

"My time is growing very short now, is it not?" he remarked, standing by the window.

"Yes," I replied, trying to smile, but with a pang at the heart, adding, for I had detected a difference in his voice, "You will be grieved to leave Nina. But you may be sure she shall be well cared for."

"Can I ever doubt that, Geraldine, when I look upon you?" he replied, with evident emotion. "Praise Heaven that I hear from all sides that your deprivation of sight is but for a time."

"Yes," I laughed; "when you return I may be able to peep at you."

"Thank Heaven!" he said, fervently.

Then silence ensued. Louis Armer broke it.

He had come to my side; he had taken my hand, and was bending over me.

"Geraldine," he remarked, "my sad married life is no secret to you. In my wretchedness at so loving, and being so deceived in woman, I vowed never to wed again."

"I know," I answered, as he paused.

"I cannot keep that vow," he went on; "that is, I cannot, if—if you will be my wife, darling!"

"Your wife?" I gasped.

The hot blood rushed to my face, then, retreating, left it pale. I sank back in my chair, overcome with a joy that was half fear.

"My wife, dearest," he repeated.

"I—I—blind——"

"Should that prevent the love I feel, the desire I have?" he exclaimed. "But one day you will see, Geraldine. Still, were it not so, no woman but you can ever cause me to break the vow I made. Dearest, Cecile destroyed my faith in woman; you have restored it. Tell me, may I seek—and this time, I feel, win—happiness at a woman's hand? Can you love me?"

Covering my face, I burst into tears. I could not at once speak. Then I whispered:

"Oh, do you not know?—have you never guessed? From that time when, a child of ten, I made you my hero—I—I think I loved—I—I loved you too."

"Geraldine, can it be?" he cried. "Recollect—remember—I am changed—aged——"

"You were destroyed by a woman," I broke in, placing my hand over his. "Let me—oh, if I may!—restore you?"

"My love—my brave, noble darling!"

His strong arms went round me. How gladly I yielded to them! My head rested on his shoulder, my blind eyes shed tears of exquisite joy.

But even at that moment my mind went back to the time when Cecile discovered my love, and half taunted me, "a child," with it.

And now he was mine—my hero—he was only mine!

Before Louis returned news had reached us of Cecile's death. I could not help asking myself if she might have died thus young had she she been a true, leal wife?

I grieved for her, yet not as I would have done under other circumstances. How was it possible, when I was counting the weeks for Louis' coming back?

When he was to arrive, even as at that other time, I stood among the rhododendrons, all aflush with their brilliant bloom, to meet him. Even as then, I could see.

Soon he came. How handsome and bronzed he was! How his eyes brightened as they beheld me! How he sprang from his horse to clasp me—"his own sweet Geraldine"—in his arms! Was ever joy more exquisite than mine!

One afternoon, as we sat together, I said, after having made many confessions:

"Louis, did you ever suspect the love I felt for you?"

"Never," he smiled, "until something one day revealed it to me."

"What was that?" I asked.

"When we are married I'll tell you," he laughed.

And it was during our happy—honeymoon that I learned I had not been mistaken when, as I searched for my fallen locket, I thought I heard a step on the velvety turf.

It was Louis'. He had come to seek me. He had approached round the syringa-bushes, and had come upon me on my hands and knees.

Stopping in surprise, he had glanced down, and—lo—there lay my treasure open at his feet.

Stooping noiselessly, he placed it within my reach, saw the pleasure with which I recovered it, and withdrew, my secret his.

"Then," I cried, starting from his side, "it was pity, not love, that made you wed me! Oh! why did you not let me remain as I was?" and I burst into tears.

"Silly little wife!" he rejoined, and his arms were round me. "What had the discovery of your love to do with mine? If you doubt its existence, look into my eyes and see what you can read in them."

I looked and read a whole world of tenderness and affection.

"My own love!—my only wife!" he exclaimed, as, fondly begging forgiveness, I nestled to him.

Yes, his only wife; and, for her's and my hero's sake, the little Nina never knew she had had another mother.

"Dorcas is Out."

BY E. L.

THREE times had a young lady in slight mourning plied the knocker on the door of Verbena Cottage without bringing anyone to admit her and yet the shutters were not closed.

The smoke was curling up from one of the chimneys, and puss lay basking in the sun on the ledge of an open window, just within which a glimpse could be caught of a work-table, on which lay Mrs. Merle's delicately-fine knitting, as if just put out of her hand.

"Perhaps auntie is down in her garden and has not heard me," the baffled visitor told herself. "I will go and see." But the door in the trellis at the side of the cottage was locked, rendering any inspection of the strip of ground behind the dwelling impossible.

So the young lady wandered back to the jasmine covered porch—too small to admit of a seat in it—and debated what to do.

The day was a summer one, the heat intense; the walk back to the station not to be thought of without dismay until the evening.

"Two miles of a dusty, shadeless highway, with the thermometer up to roasting, will send me to town looking like a Red Indian, and too tired for the Dortons' *soiree*. Besides, I shall have the mortification of hearing it hinted that it serves me right, for I would not be persuaded to postpone my visit. But who would have dreamed of Aunt Merle—stay-at-home Aunt Merle—having chosen this identical day and hour to go a-gadding? Perhaps she is having a siesta! If she is I'll wake her!"

Again the knocker was seized and plied so vigorously, that at last her arm ached, and she desisted.

Then a thin, tremulous voice piped through the key-hole:

"Go away directly, whoever you are, or I will call the police and give you in charge. Go away; I keep loaded firearms in the house."

"Don't say that! I'm so-o-o frightened!" wailed the amused auditor of these threats. "Do you fire them yourself, you bravest of women?"

"Go away," reiterated the voice inside. "If you are in distress apply at the rectory; I never give anything at the door."

"You might give me admittance," was the reply. "Don't you know me yet, you foolish old auntie?"

"Who is it?"

"Why, open and see," the young lady went on. "What can you be afraid of in broad daylight, and where is your maid?"

"Dorcas is out," explained Mrs. Merle, cautiously putting up the chain before she complied with her visitor's demand. "And there are so many tramps about, that——"

"Do I look like a tramp?" asked the owner of the lovely face that peered at her through the narrow opening. "I feel like one, for I am dusty and dishevelled, and half-melted, and all for the sake of you, you most inhospitable——"

But the chain was down now, and a small, nervous, elderly lady was standing on tip-toe to embrace her guest.

"My darling Lesley! What a delicious surprise! I did not know you were in England, and here you are, looking—oh! I must not make you vain by telling you how charming you look! When did you return?"

"Only yesterday. I have been with the Warringtons ever since Lady Champfleurs died, for as they thought I was a little worn with nursing her, they would not let me leave them. They have been most kind; but I was so weary of Continental sight-seeing, and the scrambling sort of life one lives at hotels, that I longed for a quiet time with you."

"Then now you have come you will stay with me?"

"Not just yet, dear auntie. Lettie Warrington is to be married next month, and I have promised to stay in Curzon Street till the affair is over. After that you shall have me if you will, or you and I will go to the seaside together. I should dearly like to be quiet and have my own way for a few weeks."

Her lip quivered, though she laughed.

"Remember I haven't been my own mistress, or even free to collect my thoughts, for nearly three years."

"Poor child!" murmured Mrs. Merle, caressing the hands from which she had pulled the long Suede gloves; "you had a trying time with your father's aunt; but she did not use you unkindly, I hope. If she did you were foolish to put up with it. When you consented to go abroad with her, I reminded you that you would always have a home here."

"It was very good of you, but she was in ill health, and wanted me, and loved me after her fashion. I am glad I contrived to stay with her to the last, and here I am again, none the worse for night-watches and scoldings; but how is it I find you quite alone? How could the faithful Dorcas leave you to brave the tramps and beggars without her support?"

"My dear, it has been quite an agitating day; but do let me take off your hat. Parisian, isn't it? How well it becomes you! Perhaps you were not aware that Dorcas has a married sister—a very worthy creature, I daresay—but a source of constant anxiety to us. Do sit here, Lesley, you will find it shadier, and let me cool those flushed cheeks with my Indian fan."

"Thanks, it is delightful," and Lesley leaned back in the cushions Mrs. Merle had heaped in the chair, and closed her eyes languidly. "But about Dorcas, you did not finish telling me what has become of her?"

"No, love, it was of her married sister I was speaking. I have no doubt that she is an excellent woman, but she has a new baby every year, and last summer it was twins, and not a week passes but something happens to one or other of those children, and to whom, she argues, should she appeal when in trouble but her own sister?"

"Especially as that sister has a very liberal, benevolent mistress. Aunt Merle, it was high time I came home to preserve you from being imposed upon."

"My dear Lesley, pray don't say that! Dorcas often calls her sister a weak-minded, helpless sort of body, but she would be dreadfully hurt to hear her suspected of imposition."

"Then it is to answer one of these appeals Dorcas has run away from her duties?"

"My dear, I gave her leave; how could I refuse when the telegram we had this morning informed us that one of the twins had been in convulsions all night, and Mrs. Smith herself was seriously ill. It was only for a few hours, you know. Dorcas is certain to return by the next train because——"

But here Mrs. Merle came to a full stop, and her thin features wore a look of consternation.

"Oh! Lesley, in the pleasure of seeing you so unexpectedly, I forgot that there is a circumstance with which you ought to be made acquainted before I ask you to spend even my night under my roof!"

"This sounds quite mysterious! What has happened?" laughed Lesley. "Don't keep me in suspense! Why, auntie, you are positively blushing! This complicates affairs! Pray, ma'am, have you 'e're a lover comes a-courting you?'"

"At my age? This is too absurd, but—but I am sorry to say I have a lodger."

"Good gracious!" cried Lesley, her attention now thoroughly aroused. "Was there any necessity for this? I thought you had a settled income of three hundred per annum?"

"Ah! but that was before the—bank failed. When that happened I could not bear to part with Dorcas, nor go into lodgings, so as she herself proposed letting part of this house, and promised that I should not have anything to do with whatever stranger we agreed to receive, I thought it would be my wisest plan to consent."

"Then you have a lady residing with you?"

"Oh! no; Dorcas said a gentleman would be far less troublesome, and I think she was right. Mr. Laurence is in town all day and every day, and sometimes we do not see him for a month at a time."

"What is he?—a clerk? It's always clerks who have lodgings out of town, isn't it?"

"Mr. Laurence is a great philologist, if you know what it means, my dear, and goes to different parts of the United Kingdom to study the dialects of the people for some work he is going to bring out. He is absorbed in his pursuit, reads at his meals, writes till midnight, and is so absent-minded, poor old gentleman, that Dorcas says he would be starved if she did not look after him, and jog his elbow occasionally to remind him that he has not eaten anything."

"Why doesn't she institute a feeding bottle?" asked Lesley. "It is a waste of her excellent cooking to set tasty dishes before a man who doesn't appreciate them."

"But Mr. Laurence is well-born, and most punctual in his payments; he never forgets those," Lesley was assured.

"And Dorcas likes work," the younger lady went on; "and enjoys ministering to one of that male 'sect' she professes to despise; and if her mistress really is not inconvenienced by the presence of a learned man; why should I object, unless he occupies both your best bedrooms, in which case I suppose I must go back to town?"

"As if I would let you do that! There is still a spare bed for you; and, if there were not, you should have the larger half of mine. But you must be thirsty and hungry. I wish Dorcas would come in. The train is due."

Mrs. Merle cast an anxious glance in the direction of the road from the station.

"I have kept up the kitchen-fire, the kettle boils, and you shall have some tea as soon as she arrives."

"There is no hurry. I am exceedingly cool and comfortable," was the reply. "So sit down, auntie, and let us have a dear, delightful gossip. I am so glad to be with you once more."

But though Mrs. Merle rejoiced with all her heart in the presence of her niece, she was unsettled, and answered at random the questions put to her.

Both had much to tell, and much to ask, for it was three years since Lesley had been carried off to Germany by one of the kinswomen of her deceased father, a dowager peeress.

The correspondence both aunt and niece attempted to keep up was but a desultory one, for Lady Champfleurs, a confirmed invalid, was constantly on the move, and discouraged it solely because Mrs. Merle—now a widow—had married a man in trade.

It was not till now that Lesley knew how far she and her mother's sister had in the interval drifted apart.

She had developed into womanhood, and her lonely relative had become more frail, more nervous, and dependent on the old servant, whose absence she kept deploring.

"There is a trunk of yours at the station? Of course, my love, it shall be fetched. Dorcas will see to that. I hope there is no hurry. Had I known you would be here to-day, she should not have left me. Yet how could I have refused? But here she is at last," for the lock of the gate had clicked; "and I can sit down and talk to you with a mind at ease."

"Does Dorcas wear a coat and continuations?"

This query sent Mrs. Merle to the window to reconnoitre.

"Dear, dear, what a disappointment! It is not she, but that horrid youth from the railway-station. Surely he is not bringing us another telegram!"

"Let me go and see;" and Lesley, her fatigue forgotten, ran to the door, to bring back one of those yellow envelopes Mrs. Merle had regarded with horror ever since one of them conveyed to her the tidings of the sudden decease of her husband.

By this time she was trembling with alarm, and asking her niece what had happened?

Had there been a collision, or had Dorcas been knocked down by one of those dreadful cabs, and carried to a hospital? And were any of her limbs broken?

"Let me read her message, and I'll tell you. Dorcas herself is all right, so be calm, you foolish auntie. This is what she says:

"'Betsy too ill to be left. Very sorry. Send Sall's chair.'

"What does she mean by that? and who is Sall?" queried Lesley.

Mrs. Merle puckered her brows over the last three words of the missive, till its signification dawned upon her.

"I think I understand. She means Mrs. Sells, the charwoman. She wishes me to send for her: but oh! Lesley, I cannot endure the woman! She takes snuff, and I found my eau-de-cologne bottle empty after her last visit."

"Then don't have her," said Lesley, decidedly. "There's no necessity of it. You and I can wait upon ourselves. It will be a new sensation. How fortunate I came!"

"Very fortunate, love!" assented Mrs. Merle, faintly. "At least it would be, only—only there's Mr. Laurence to be considered."

"Mr. Laurence! Ah, yes, the lodger. What a bore he is, begging his pardon! Cannot you send him word that we are in difficulties, and he must go to another hotel?"

"If I knew where to find him," sighed Mrs. Merle. "But I do not. He left word that he would be home at dinner at seven."

"And there is no dinner for him, poor man! I begin to see that he is to be pitied more than we are."

"Well, not exactly. There is a cold fowl and some ham, and a tart, and I could set the table before he gets here; but then someone must wait upon him, and pour out his coffee at nine o'clock, after which he goes upstairs. I suppose it is my duty, and I ought not to mind it; but I am that nervous——"

Mrs. Merle was beginning to cry, when Lesley gave her a loving hug and told her not to be silly.

"Leave it all to me. I am not afraid of this learned morsel of humanity, nor should be if he had all the 'ologies' crammed into his poor brain. I'll be his waitress, and do my spiriting so cleverly, that ten chances to one if he finds out that I am unaccustomed to it."

"But, my dearest child, I could not, I ought not, to permit it! Let you take upon yourself degrading offices that my own pride shrinks from—impossible!"

Lesley laughed at this confession.

"There is no such word as 'impossible' in my dictionary. I mean to do as I said, so let us commence by taking our tea in the kitchen. It will be a sort of breaking in for that disgusting pride of ours! We might mortify ourselves by drinking the fragrant hero out of slop-basons, but I'll not insist on that. We will try and let ourselves down gently."

As Dorcas's domain was always exquisitely neat and clean, the meal was not only eaten, but enjoyed. At its close, while Mrs. Merle was feeding and caressing her pet cats and canary, Lesley danced away to make a raid on the old servant's wardrobe, returning in a very short time completely metamorphosed.

"The part of Dorcas," she announced, "by Miss Danescourt; her first appearance in that character. Do you think I shall pass muster, auntie? If Mr. Laurence should discover that I am only a substitute, will he be angry?"

"My dear, my dear!" was all poor Mrs. Merle could find to say.

She was amused, and yet frightened; unwilling that her niece should do this, even though it were to spare her, yet unable to resist laughing at the clever mimicry of her old servant, in which Lesley now indulged. Precisely at seven Mr. Lawrence admitted himself, according to custom, with a latch-key, and his peep into the small dining-room of the cottage showed the dinner-table set with unusual care, for there was an epergne of flowers upon it, and roses were arranged around the china basket of fruit that formed the dessert.

Not at all anxious to make her debut, Lesley sent her aunt to lie down for an hour, and stayed quietly out of sight till the sound of the gong, placed within reach of Mr. Laurence, compelled her to enter the room and commence her duties.

She had taken a peep at herself in the glass after dressing for her part. Dorcas's second-best brown stuff gown was not a perfect fit, but the muslin handkerchief pinned across the bosom hid that, and the snowy cap of lace and muslin was all the more becoming because the strings were tied coquettishly under Lesley's bonnie brown hair instead of being fastened under the chin.

It is true the skirts were short, for Dorcas was a fine specimen of a hardy, well grown Somersetshire woman; but then this only tended to display the slender ankles, silk hose, and buckled shoes of the young lady.

Knowing that her hands must betray her if Mr. Laurence glanced at them, she had taken the precaution of borrowing a pair of Mrs. Merle's black mittens, and feeling herself quite a match for an ancient antiquary, Lesley opened the door and asked the rather unnecessary question:

"Did you ring?"

Mr. Laurence, who had a book propped up beside his plate, may not have heard the question; he certainly did not in the least heed it.

It was another voice that said:

"I—I—to ask you to refill the carafe. The heat makes me——"

But a start and a stare finished the sentence, and sent Lesley out of the room furious with herself for being so easily disconcerted.

Mr. Laurence was not dining alone. He had brought home with him a frank, handsome, gentlemanly-looking young fellow, far more observant than his host.

However, the carafe must be refilled with ice-cold water and carried in, no matter how intently the provoking stranger eyed her.

But as soon as she came into the room Mr. Laurence who was explaining the meaning of a Celtic inscription, stopped himself to accost her.

"Oh—ah! my good Dorcas—it is Dorcas, isn't it? Will my landlady accommodate for the night this young friend of mine?"

"I'll goo an' ax her, zur," replied Lesley, imitating as closely as she could the Somersetshire burr of her aunt's old servant, and refusing to see the critical gaze that followed her every movement, as she proceeded in the most matter-of-fact manner she could assume to remove plates that had been used, put fresh ones, twitch the cloth straight where Mr. Laurence's heavy volume had disarranged it, and finally whisk away with an air of unconcern, that only lasted till she had regained the kitchen.

"Tiresome fellow! he could see that I was masquerading, and betrayed it by the profound respect with which he thanked me when I handed him a knife, and the smile that curled his beardless lips. Who can he be? Rolf, Mr. Laurence called him. Rolf what? Yet, after all, why should I care? We are not likely to encounter each other again."

Consoled by this thought, she played her part with apparent unconsciousness of the young man's presence, and had cleared the table, put away in the scullery and larder the debris of the meal, and was cutting some bread and butter to take in with the coffee, when the kitchen door softly opened.

Never doubting that it was Mrs. Merle, she went on with her task, saying cheerfully:

"Welcome, auntie; I hope your nap has refreshed you. Do you know I have betrayed myself? Not to Mr. Laurence—he is purblind; but to an impertinent boy he brought home with him, and wants to keep here for the night."

"May the impertinent boy carry that tray for you?" asked someone, and Lesley felt the crimson color sweep over her face and neck.

She dared not meet the mirthful eyes of the speaker; and she was determined to keep him at bay, so she made a rustic curtsey and answered with a "Thank ye kindly, zur, if he mortal heavy, I won't deny it."

Having thus burdened him, she made an errand to the larder, and stayed there till he had departed, but in less than five minutes she found him at her elbow again.

"Is there anything else I can do for you, Dorcas? No? Then may I smoke a cigarette at this window while Mr. Laurence is drinking his coffee?"

"You mun do your like about that, zur," replied Lesley, almost dropping a cup in her confusion, but determined not to perceive his quizzical glances. "I'm a'most through my washing cop, and so you can have the kitchen to yourself."

"Thanks, but I cannot bear the thought of driving you away. What a pretty, quiet spot this is! How long have you lived here with Mrs. Merle?"

"I've no head for reckoning," she answered, carelessly.

"Neither in French nor English?"

Not till then did Lesley notice that his last question had been put in the former language. How dare he lay traps for her in this way?

She flashed such an indignant look at him that he threw his handkerchief over his head; but she knew he was laughing behind this screen—laughing at her—and so she punished him with a biting sarcasm.

"Dear heart, zur, you mun be very young indeed to waste your time in puttin' such silly questions to a poor servant girl! I wish you somethin' better to do!"

And then she noiselessly fled upstairs, and her tormentor saw her no more. She also baffled him in the morning by rising at so early an hour that Mr. Laurence's room was set in order, and his breakfast ready to be eaten, long before his guest awoke.

The hands that had done the work were invisible; a summons on the gong being answered by Dorcas herself, who had returned by the first train from town, and as soon as she arrived Lesley departed.

But ere she went, she bound those she was leaving to keep the secret of her identity.

"If that saucy boy should have the audacity to make any inquiries respecting me, you must refuse to answer them. He is too presuming and ought to be rebuffed."

Mrs. Merle solemnly promised obedience, and so did Dorcas, but one or the other of them must have played the traitor, even if it were unconsciously, for on the day of Lettie Warrington's nuptials the groomsman appointed to squire Lesley—the prettiest of the bridesmaids—to and from the church was a certain Rolf Gerard, whom she recognized as soon as he was introduced to her.

"Are we to commence our acquaintance, Miss Danescourt," he asked, "by exchanging mutual forgiveness?"

"What have I done to need it?" Lesley retorted.

"Called me—the senior wrangler at Oxford last year—an impertinent boy. It was such a cruel allusion to my lack of hirsute appendages that I have borne malice ever since."

"Really? It was only an exemplification of the old saying about listeners. You were intolerably rude, sir. You ought to have respected my incognita."

"I have respected it ever since. I always call you Dorcas when I think of you. I never sketch your profile from memory, but I add the coquettish muslin cap, and the smoothly-folded kerchief. I never recall the liquid tones of your voice without wishing I were a boy again."

"Mr. Gerard, you are talking terrible nonsense!" murmured Lesley, laughing and blushing. "Are you trying to make me regret that simply out of good nature I assumed a part I would have prayed cred itably enough, but for you?"

"Trying to make you regret it? No. I should like that evening to be one of your pleasantest reminiscences, as it will always be mine."

Rolf Gerard must have been in earnest, and presently he must have induced Lesley to think so, for the next time he saw Mr. Laurence he informed that worthy philologist that he was going to be married.

"Is it possible!" exclaimed the old bachelor. "May I ask the name of the lady?"

And the smiling reply was—"Dorcas!"

Etiquette in Germany.—German etiquette is very minute. It does not stop with the ordinary rules for eating, drinking, calling and receiving.

It prescribes mazes of trivial details which would fill so many fat volumes that even the Germans have not had the courage to write them.

It directs a man what to say just before beginning to drink a glass of beer and just before finishing it.

It tells him the exact words he must use in insulting a stranger.

It graduates nicely the depth of the bows that are due to the privy councilor, the court councilor, the tutor, the judge, the tradesman, the barber and the restaurateur.

It explains why the clergymen should bow first to the Herr Baron and last to the Herr Bankier.

It describes just how a man must kiss a woman's hand in the drawing-room and just why he need not give her his seat in a horse car.

It even describes the circle in which a man may waltz at a ball.

Perhaps the best criterion of the minuteness of German etiquette is the little unwritten code on pocket manners. German good form is shocked by the helter-skelter condition of the American pocket.

A well-bred German never allows his keys and jackknife, his small change, his shoe buttoner and his cigar cutter to jingle about loosely in his trousers pocket.

A naked cigar protruding from a waistcoat shocks the modesty of German good form much more than a dozen or more of Rubens' strapping Dutch goddesses. The greatest offense against German pocket manners is to carry small silver coins in the pocket.

A German lieutenant may have only a half a dollar to his name, but he carries as big a purse as if he owned all the notes of the Imperial Reichsbank.

In paying for five cents' worth of beer he goes down into his trousers and draws out his flabby pocketbook with dignity, thanking heaven he is a mannerly, high-born Prussian, and not a vulgar tradesman like the American at his side, who has just slapped down on the table a mess of gold, silver, keys, and manicure apparatus.

The small German schoolboy is not even allowed to carry his carfare without a purse. The servant girl who earns but $40, a year, would not carry the price of a loaf of black bread through the street in her hand.

How it Feels to be Eaten.—Sir Lyon Playfair recently related that he knew three men who escaped with their lives after being partially devoured by wild animals.

The first was Livingstone, the great African traveler, who was knocked on his back by a lion, which began to munch his arm. He asserted that he felt no fear of pain, and that his only feeling was one of intense curiosity as to which part of his body the lion would take next.

The next was Rustem Pasha. A bear attacked him and tore off part of his arm and shoulder. He also said that he had neither a sense of pain nor of fear, but that he felt excessively angry because the bear grunted with so much satisfaction in munching him.

The third case is that of Sir Edward Bradford, an Indian officer, now occupying a high position in the India Office. He was seized in a solitary place by a tiger, which held him firmly behind the shoulders with one paw and then deliberately devoured the whole of his arm, beginning at the hand and ending at the shoulder. He is very positive that he had no sensation of fear, and thinks that he felt a little pain when the fangs went through his hand, but is certain that he felt none during the munching of his arm.

Looking Ahead.—"You must be very fond of me," she murmured. "What makes you think so?" he asked, in tones of tenderness. "Because you have known me only a week, and yet my little brother says that he has seen you hanging about our house every day since we became acquainted. Such ardor, I am afraid, will not last." "Shall I tell you why I have been hanging about your house during the day?" he asked, as he pressed the tiny hand which nestled so lovingly and confidently in his own. "Tell me." "I am trying to get acquainted with the dog."

On a local railroad printed blanks are furnished conductors for the use of reporting accidents. It is related that a recent return caused great laugh in the superintendent's office. Opposite the side head "disposition," the conductor wrote that the injured passenger was sober and industrious, instead of stating where he was sent. The disposition of the carcass of a cow, killed by his train, bothered another conductor, for he declared that the disposition of the animal was kind and gentle.

Mrs. R.—"Why, Professor, what is the matter?" Professor Von Spelchen (angrily)—Matter, I spend von hour und von half dis morning to explain to der young lady vot is der difference between von whole rest and von half rest, and she still take der half rest ven I say der whole rest!" Mrs. R.—"Why, Elsie, I am surprised. Why don't you do as the Professor tells you; you know you have plenty of time."

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

As a precaution against kleptomaniacs the parlor ornaments in some of the hotels have an electrical connection communicating with the hallmaid or man, and consequently when one of them is touched an alarm is sounded, at once summoning an attendant, who frustrates the scheme of appropriation. An old lady from the country, who had come to attend the celebration, caused a general alarm in one of the uptown hotels the other day by taking up and examining all the parlor ornaments.

A piece of fat pork succeeded in starting a remarkable series of accidents in a Crawfordsville (Ind.) household. It had been placed in a pan in the oven of a stove, caught fire and blazed out into the room. A boy helped the situation by throwing on water, when the hot grease was scattered over him, burning him severely. He bolted out of the door and fell over his little brother, knocking the latter senseless, and at the same time the father, hastening to the burned child's assistance, fell down stairs and was rendered unconscious. The fire mean while went out.

This is a full description of the dress worn by the American Duchess of Marlboro at the drawing-room. The skirt was draped in front with black net, embroidered with gold, silver and fine cut jet, in large wreaths of the hanging design associated with Louis the Sixteenth's period. The net was finished at the hem with a deep border of gold and silver. The back was of net embroidered in smaller wreaths with black silk, so finely done that it resembled an exquisitly rich lace. The bodice and train were of black satin brocaded in silk, with a curious design sweeping gracefully across it like long-fronded ferns. The train was lined with satin, and bordered all round with ostrich-feather groups of three splendid plumes.

A new scheme to induce warm hearted persons to open their pocket-books has been exposed in Atlanta. The scheme was worked by a man and his wife. The latter went from house to house asking for money with which to bury her husband. She received several contributions, but one lady doubting her story, said: "I'll go home with you." She did so, and to her great surprise found the husband laid out on a table with a white sheet thrown over him. She was much moved by the sight and pulling out her purse gave the "widow" several dollars in small change. After leaving the house the lady discovered that she had forgotten her handkerchief and returned to get it. Upon re-entering the room she was shocked to see the "dead man" sitting up counting the money.

A short time ago the Queen of Italy, in the course of a railway journey, stopped at a certain station and was met by the Mayor and municipality in all the glory of their robes of office. An elegant luncheon had been provided, but the royal appetite was uncertain, and the Queen requested the obsequious deputation to get her a glass of wine with which to take the required pill. This was promptly brought; but while drinking it a drop fell from the glass on to her traveling dress. She at once sought in her pocket for a handkerchief to remove the stain, but the worthy Mayor, whose dusty vision behind the counter had possibly accustomed him to the purposes for which ladies seek their pockets, misunderstood the motion of the Queen's hand. He supposed she was reaching for her purse, and murmured, humbly, but earnestly: "Ah, no, your Majesty. I assure you it is all paid for."

Women who have no taste in dress often discover, in donning widow's weeds, that they are positively pretty creatures. This is simply because, as their costumes are entirely black, they have no longer a chance to indulge a riotous fancy among colors that will not blend. Most faces are wonderfully softened by enveloping folds of crape. Those who truly mourn never forget the departed, but always cling to the mourning drapery. In nine cases out of ten this apparent devotion to the dead is only devotion to beauty-enhancing weeds. The few to whom it is unbecoming throw off the crape as soon as is consistent with the custom, and may really grieve in grays and browns and blues for a much longer period than the widow who persists in wearing black for years and years, not solely in faithful memory of the deceased, but really because she looks well in it.

Do you know the reason long-handled eyeglasses sprang into favor with the ultra fast? Well, you know ladies have, don't you? Yes, everybody knows that, and those who know it from experience know it to their very great discomfort; for, with the sleeves made as tight as the skin, and the entire dress waist as close fitting as compressed flesh and bones will permit, to lift the hand up to the level of the eyes, if it is a possibility (and sometimes it isn't), is certainly a dangerous thing to attempt—dangerous because the tightly strained sleeve of the dress may burst. Besides, it is a painful exertion. The expansion of certain muscles in an outward position of the arm and shoulder beyond the narrow limits of the dress is positive torture. Hence the long handle to eyeglass and opera glass was a perfect boon. You will always see the slim waist, tight sleeves and long handled eyeglass together.

Our Young Folks.

HOW THE PARTY WAS SPOILT.

BY S. PITT.

IT was to be a birthday party—little Jack's. He was one; when they got beyond that number birthdays had to be forgotten, there were so many other things to be done and thought of.

Jack was a general favorite, a fat good-natured little fellow, and his mother had washed out his pink spotted frock before she went off to her day's work.

Altogether, Jack was a baby to be proud of, and the whole company determined to make it a party to be remembered.

"Mother left three slices of bread-and-butter and a jug of cold tea for it," announced Patty. Patty was the eldest of the tribe, consequently mistress when mother was away; "but there's eight of us; we'll want a lot more."

"Well, we must get a lot more," said Tom, looking round at the seven hungry faces. "I've got a heap of messages for this morning, and if the folk pay up I'll bring some things back with me."

"And Mrs. Sims promised me two apples for minding her door yesterday," chimed in Willie. "I'll go and ask her for them this afternoon; they'd get eaten up if we got them now."

"All right," agreed Tom; "mind you all bring as much as you can get, and don't be late. We'll begin at six."

Late! there was little fear of it.

Before the half after four had tolled out from the big tower clock across the river the stragglers began to gather at the farthest corner of the dock, close to the water edge; it was out of the way of the carts and general traffic there, and sheltered by a big warehouse on the land side, and from the top of the parapet on the other they could look right up and down the broad river, and inspect every ship and steamer that went by while the party was in progress.

That parapet was also useful as a racing ground, as it was smooth, and tolerably slippery, so that there was always the exciting possibility of sliding down with a terrific splash into the river beneath, and being fished out again by somebody with a long boat-hook.

Tom had actually seen a boy pulled out that way once, and had recited the whole thrilling history so often that his hearers were fully prepared to distinguish themselves in the same way if ever the chance should come.

"But if there didn't anybody come with a boat-hook?" Patty suggested once cheerfully, "and you just had to stop there till you was drowned?"

"Oh! then there's lots of other ways," answered Bob, in no wise disturbed; "catch hold of a board, or swim out to a ship. You're only a girl, so it's no use you trying."

"I'm not going to try, nor Jack either," returned Patty with decision. "There's Willie coming, and he's got his apples; let us go get the things ready."

The feast—the part at least that had arrived—was duly laid out on the stone bench and looked very well.

The bread-and-butter stood between Willie's two apples; Dick had brought a big lettuce and a bunch of radishes, Bob had a sea-biscuit—and that is a biscuit that lasts a long time: it is not meant to be eaten in a hurry.

They eyed it with great pride, and with some impatience to begin it.

"Why doesn't Tom come?" cried Dick, returning from an excursion he had taken to the dock gates to look for some sign of him. "He must be waiting to bring an awful lot, it's going to strike six in twenty-five minutes now."

"He'll be dreadfully late if he isn't here soon," was the next remark, two minutes later, "or us all go to the gates."

Tom was an important person. Away they all went, except Patty and Jack, who kept guard over the tea-things.

It was only a quarter of an hour before the time when at last they caught sight of him in the distance, the pockets of a long-tailed coat bulging out in all directions. Dick raised a cheer.

"Yes, you'll cheer when you see what I've got inside of them," remarked the hero mysteriously, as he marched up to the end of the dock, where he turned out his pockets with an air of dignified benevolence worthy of the contents.

Apples! Willie's two were nowhere beside these! A roll, shrimps—a whole bagful, another of nuts, two bottles of ginger-beer, and, last of all, a box of matches.

"What's that for?" cried Bob; "we can't eat matches for tea."

"You'll see when tea's over," returned Tom, putting the matches back into his pocket; "it isn't every day we have a party and this is going to be a grand one, I can tell you."

"Are they to make little lights on the table with?" persisted Bob curiously.

"No, of course they aren't. Now don't bother; we're going to begin the party."

They did begin immediately. Patty sat on the end of the table, Jack on her knee, and poured out the tea as grandly as though it had been hot and in a proper teapot.

The cracked mugs were handed down the bench just the same as at the ragged-school parties; but the ragged-school parties had never dreamed of shrimps and nuts for tea; it was a splendid change from ordinary bread-and-butter, and sometimes not nearly enough of that.

It was not till all the provisions, even to that hard sea-biscuit, had vanished that anybody had a thought to spare for Tom's mysterious box of matches.

"I know what it's for," began Willie, coming back to the subject when the tea was over, and they were all sitting or lounging on the parapet, watching the ships drift lazily round with the tide.

"We're going to strike them one by one, and drop them in the water to make a fizz."

"Are we?" echoed Tom scornfully; "no, it's something rather better than that. We are going to have a bonfire—a big one too."

"Oh!" in a shout of mingled awe and delight from Dick, and Willie, and Bob, who had never dared to think of anything of that kind.

Why, they had not even seen one for over a year, and then it belonged to the boys on the training-ship, and there was nobody else allowed to touch it.

A bonfire all to themselves! Tom might have told them before now. How soon could they begin it?

Patty said "Oh!" as well as the others, but she looked a little uneasy after it.

"Tom, I'm afraid mother wouldn't let us," she said presently, when she got a chance to put in a word. "You know how cross she was when Bob got his pinafore burnt."

"That was ages ago," interrupted Bob eagerly. "We're big enough to take care of ourselves now, I hope."

"That was a different thing," said Tom; "it was the kitchen fire then, and Bob would throw pieces of paper on it; of course he got burned. This is a regular bonfire, out of doors, and she won't know anything about it, either."

Patty was not quite satisfied. "I don't think we ought, Tom, though I'd like the fire. Hadn't we better wait and ask her first?"

"How can we?" retorted Tom. "By the time she comes home it will be too late. You are always making a fuss about something."

"Whereabouts is it to be?" broke in the others; they did not want to waste any more time in talking.

"Under that little shed beside the warehouse; there's lots of chips the men left behind this morning, and there's bits of old wood lying about enough for a lovely fire. Pick out the nice black pieces; they make the best blaze."

Away went the three after the wood, Patty, Jack, and the little ones sat on a log inside the shed, and watched Tom. He crumpled up the paper bags that had held the nuts and shrimps, and stuck the chips carefully round them. There were plenty of fragments, and by the time Dick and Willie arrived with their black pieces the fire began to look a very respectable size indeed; and Bob hurried in last, proud and breathless, with a big lump of coal he had taken from a pile in the next dock.

"Now then, we're all ready," announced Tom triumphantly. "One—two—three!" and the match was struck, and pushed under the paper at the bottom of the pile.

It ought to have blazed up at once after all the care; but it didn't. There was a feeble splutter, a red glimmer for a minute or two, then out it went.

Another match was struck—with less ceremony this time—but it behaved no better than the first, and nearly half the boxful had disappeared before the chips began to crackle and send out a tiny flame.

But if the blaze was feeble, there was plenty of smoke. It got down Jack's throat, and kept him in fits of coughing. Patty's eyes smarted sadly.

"Perhaps if we blew it a bit it would blaze up quicker," suggested Dick.

"I think the chips are damp," remarked Patty, carrying Jack over to the other side, to see if it was less smoky there.

"They've burnt matches enough to dry them, even if they were damp," said Tom gloomily. "Blow away, Dick!"

Dick blew, so did Bob and Willie, till their faces were nearly as black and grimy as Bob's lump of coal; but it did little good. The bonfire did not go out, and that was all that could be said for it.

A tiny flickering blaze showed now and again, but there was neither warmth nor cheerfulness about it, and but for the dignity of having a bonfire of their very own, there was not one of them that would not have been infinitely more comfortable outside and away from it. Worse than all, they were getting out of temper with each other.

"I do believe it's going to burn at last," cried out Willie, breaking a dismal silence that had fallen upon the company.

Perhaps it might, but they were never to know! Just then a tall shadow fell across the doorway—the policeman from the dock gates.

That troublesome smoke—they had not once thought of the chance of its bringing somebody else to find out the cause of it.

The band looked up at him in blank dismay.

"Hullo! what mischief are you after in here, I should like to know?" he demanded. "Out of this, every one of you," and with one sweep of his big foot that unfortunate fire was scattered in all directions.

"We were only making a bonfire," pleaded Dick.

"You'd have made a bonfire of the whole warehouse very soon, and those children are ill with the smoke. Go straight home to bed every one of you, and don't let me catch you at anything of this kind again, or I'll take you all off to prison next time."

"I thought we were going to have such a fine party," sobbed Willie disconsolately as they crept away homewards, not even Tom daring to raise one word of objection: "and here we are going off to bed like babies in broad daylight. That policeman spoilt it all."

"It wasn't the policeman; it was that fire," said Patty sorrowfully. "We ought to have done what mother told us, and then he couldn't have been angry with us. We know quite well she wouldn't like it, but we just went and did it all the same. It serves us right."

There was a beautiful red sunset over the river; the ships sailed away peacefully down the tide, but nobody was there to see, for the party was utterly spoilt, and the company were all in bed.

"BRAVE MEG."

BY E. R. CROOM.

WHAT a queer name for a boat, thought I to myself, as I read these words painted in big letters on a lifeboat which lay high and dry on the beach of the little fishing village.

Now, as many of my young readers may never have been to such an out-of-the-way corner as this particular little place, I must try to describe it to them.

Just fancy to yourselves, then, a big horseshoe, forming a pretty little bay, with high rocky cliffs extending far back in stretches of moorland purple with heather.

The tiny village of Abergyle stands almost at the one point of the horseshoe, while the coastguard is perched at the other.

"Can you tell me why your lifeboat got such an odd name?" said I to a weather-beaten fisherman, who was sitting busily mending his net.

"Oo ay, that I can," responded the old salt, and proud enough he seemed to be to enlighten me on the subject.

Now, I shall tell you just as he told me, only, of course, I must change some of his odd words for simpler ones, or else you wouldn't understand them.

"It was one day just three years gone by come next December," said the old man, "when all the boats were off to sea, that we saw a storm was coming, so me and two or three other old hands made fast the craft in the bay so as to be ready; and sure enough, as night came on, the wind kept rising, moaning and sighing, till at last it rose to a 'skirl' that made our hearts ache, for we knew it would be a terrible night for the poor lads at sea.

"About nine o'clock, after the bairns were away to bed, most of the mothers came down to the beach, poor things, to watch for the boats, waiting for their husbands and fathers. Few but had somebody belonging to them gone.

"Will Findlay's wife came up to me, wringing her hands.

"'Eh, Dan, Dan!' she cried, 'I'm sure I saw licht ower there at the Gulls' Rock, an' if it be so, it's my Willy, for he telt me he would licht the lamp if he was safe pushed comin' hame.'

"What to do I didna ken," continued the old man. "We hadn't a boat fit to go in, and ne'er a hand fit to pull her if we had. Our only hope was the coastguard, and it was a clear mile and a half to the watch-house by the beach. There was the way across by the Shark's Teeth," said he, pointing to a jagged line of ugly black rocks just showing above the ebbing tide, "but they were so slippery and dangerous that the bravest man amongst us durstn't try to cross them even in daylight, far less by night. We could only wait and hope.

"In the excitement none of us had noticed wee Meg Findlay, who had slipped from her bed and followed her mother in the dark, down to the beach; but when the bairn heard someone say the coastguard was our only hope, away she ran. Never a fear for the black rocks had she; daddy was in danger, that was enough.

"On she went, stumbling and slipping, cutting her feet almost at every step, clinging to the rocks, sometimes crawling on her hands and knees, up again when she could, but never stopping, never faltering.

"On she went, and at last she scrambled, panting and breathless, up to the coastguards' door. The men on duty could scarcely believe their eyes when they saw 'Wee Meg,' whom they all knew well. 'Eh! gang (go), gang at once!' cried the child. 'Dad's at the Gulls' Rock, maybe groonin'; his boat's there, we saw his licht.'

"Never waiting a minute to rest, away she sped, down the slippery beach and on to the rocks again before anyone could stop her.

"Mother was waiting, and must be told that father would be safe. She could laugh at the black rocks now, for had she not done her best for her dear ones, and they would all be happy again.

"Meantime, you may be sure the men at the station were not idle; Meg's example was already felt. They weren't going to be beaten by a little lass like that, bless her! No, indeed! and away went the boat with a 'Hey, lads, give way,' as heartily sung out as if they had been starting for a summer-time race instead of as dangerous a bit of work as ever boat did.

"By-and-by, we watching on the beach saw a white speck moving along over the rocks, but none of us fancied it could be a living human being. I watched it at first, thinking it might be a sea-gull, but but it couldn't be that, for it kept to the ground, and a bird would have flown. On it came, getting bigger and bigger, till it ran up and put its arms round its mother (for it was wee Meg), crying out, 'Mother dearie, dad's safe. I've been to the coastguards, and they're gone to him.'

"'Thank Heaven! Thank Heaven!' was all the poor woman could say, as she hugged the bairn to her breast. The little one wouldn't hear of going to bed, so we took our rough coats and made a nest for her, and there she lay like a little white dove waiting for her 'dad.'

"We hadn't to wait long neither, for there came the lifeboat with her whole crew safe and sound; but it had been a narrow escape for them, poor fellows, for the boat had struck on the Gulls' Rock, and was filling fast when the rescue had come.

"I'll never forget Will Findlay's face when he lifted up wee Meg in his arms.

He said 'Lads, I thank God for my life this night, but I thank Him more for having a brave bairn like this.'

"News of Meg's heroism got about, and by-and-by we gathered enough money, with one help and another, to buy a lifeboat for ourselves, and we called her Brave Meg, and there she is herself," added he, as I saw a curly-headed lassie about eleven years old coming along.

"Meg," I said, "aren't you proud of being such a brave little girl, and saving your father's life?"

I was ashamed of the thoughtless question the moment after, when she raised her honest blue eyes and said, "Father risks his life many a night for my sake. Surely I could risk mine once for his."

A CHARTER PERPETUAL.—There is an interesting spot in Rocky Hill, in the lower part, near Cromwell, Conn., that is called "Dividend."

Its name goes back to the founding of the town of Wethersfield, of which Rocky Hill was a part. After the appropriation of land, 300 acres remained alongside a stream, it was given to Jonathan and Gershom Bulkeley, brothers, on condition that they should forever maintain a grist mill there. It was therefore called "Dividend"—being a dividend to the Bulkeleys for a duty to be performed.

This condition was kept for years until all but 100 acres were sold. A few years ago the remainder passed into the hands of Charles E. Billings. He did not desire to continue the milling business and therefore tore down the mill. But, upon consultation with able counsel, he found that it was necessary to rebuild it to make valid his title, and the title to the 200 other acres. The mill is a modern one and is run whenever the neighbors have grist to grind.

ACKNOWLEDGING FAULTS.—There is one means of preserving peace, harmony, and goodwill in our social relations which, although very simple, very just, and manifestly very effective, is perhaps more frequently shunned and disliked than any other. It is the frank admission of having been in the wrong. Nothing so quickly disarms resentments, calms irritation, melts away cold displeasure, turns anger into tenderness, and changes a defiant attitude to one of sympathy, as this candid confession; and yet few words are more rarely uttered. The simple avowal of the truth, without excuse or palliation—"I was wrong," or "I was mistaken," or "I regret having said or done as I did"—is worth a thousand elaborate attempts at explanation which are generally disbelieved, unaccepted, and give rise to argument instead of reconciliation.

A WEST CHESTER paper had this item in a late issue: On Monday George Bullock, residing in Birmingham township, Delaware county, set at work to repair the porch attached to his residence. In the work he was assisted by his son George, his grandson Harry, and his great-grandson Willie, their respective ages being 73, 43, 21 years and the last six months, though it will be admitted that the little fellow didn't help much, still he was there and rounded out the four generations. Each one is the oldest member of his respective generation.

JUSTICE: "You say you did not know that you were violating the law. Ah! but, my dear sir, ignorance of the law is no excuse to any man."

Prisoner: "That's kind o' rough on both of us, ain't it, Judge."

Crier: "Order in the Court!"

MABEL: "I'll never try to flirt with a Providence drug clerk again as long as I live!" Flora: "Why?" Mabel: "Why I winked at one of them in the store, the other day, and he insulted me by putting whisky in my soda water."

T. GRANGER STEWART, M. D., F. R. S. E., Ordinary Physician to H. M., the Queen, in Scotland, Professor of Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh, writes: "Hypertrophy of the heart is almost always present in cases of advanced cirrhotic disease, and also in the advanced stages of the inflammatory affection. One may trace in patients the gradual development of this hypertrophy advancing *pari passu* (together) with the progress of the renal (kidney) affection." In large number of these cases the kidney disease is entirely overlooked and the trouble ascribed to heart disease as a cause, when in reality the kidney disease is the cause and the heart trouble the effect. This error is made easy on account of the kidney disease having no local manifestations in the majority of cases. The kidney disease can be cured by the timely use of Warner's Safe Cure and the consequence avoided.

A LITTLE DAY.

BY S. U. W.

And, after all, how short is life!
A while wherein to turn
From page to page, from youth to age,
Forgetting while we learn.

The bee can flit from sweet to sweet,
But we can only fly
From thorn to flower, from sweet to sour,
Until we droop and die!

From youth to age 'tis like a dream
That passes quickly by;
From joy to care, from foul to fair,
We pass, and know not why.

From love to hate it seems no more
Than just from town to town;
From dark to light, from wrong to right,
And so from smile to frown.

And, after all, how short it is,
Alike for sage and clown!
A hundred years of hopes and fears
Must bring the curtain down.

We take offence; and long before
Our hearts have quite forgiven,
Our spirits flee from earth and we
Are fast asleep in heaven!

ABOUT PEARLS.

In most regions of the East, and particularly in Persia, in ancient times the pearl was ranked the first of all gems; and no end of legend and myth was associated with it. Even in India, which furnishes a partial exception, as putting first the diamond, the Hindoos endowed Vishnu with the special honor of having created pearls; and all their gods are so richly decorated with pearls as to have awakened in the minds of many travelers no little surprise and admiration.

Egyptians, Babylonians and Assyrians, as well as Persians, held them in the highest esteem, and the ancient Mexicans were in no whit behind in their appreciation and reverence. The palace of Montezuma, we read, was studded with pearls and emeralds, and the Aztec kings possessed specimens of pearls of the utmost value, got, as is believed, from the pearl fisheries of Panama.

The ancients do not seem to have had any clear conception of the natural process by which pearls are produced, and it is possible enough that they would have rejected it even had it been made known to them. Greeks and Romans, as far as we can ascertain, were in this no whit in advance of Egyptians, and Babylonians. Even in the days of Pliny, men's ideas were vague enough on this subject as on many others which science has made plain.

"Pearls," says he, "are great or small, better or worse, according to the quantity and quality of the dew they received. For if the dew were pure and clear that went into them then were the pearls fair and orient; if thick and troubled, then the pearls likewise were demure, foul and dullish; whereby, no doubt, it is apparent and plain that they participate more of the air and dew than of the water and sea, for according as the morning is fair so are they clear; otherwise, if it be misty and cloudy they will be misty and thick in color. Cloudy weather spoiled their color, lightning stopped their growth, and thunder made the shell-fish miscarry altogether, and eject hollow husks called Physemata or bubbles."

To turn from the fancy and romance of the ancients to the sober facts of nature is only to find a truer romance.

The pearl is simply a secretion of the common substance, carbonate of lime, which is drawn in by the oyster from the water, and employed, mixed with some fluid proper to itself, and along with some extremely thin, almost transparent membrane, in forming the lining of its shell.

The gem is due either to some wound, which throws off osseous particles, or to some irritating substance, such as a grain of sand finding its way within the shell, against which the oyster fortifies itself by wrapping it round in layer after layer of the same substance as that with which it lines its shell. In the centre of every pearl it is said by scientific men, there will be found in cutting it some such particle as this.

In 1680, Jacquin, a rosary maker of Paris, filled hollow glass beads with the scales of a small river-fish (the bleak), putting them through some process of condensation, and since then the world has been at no loss to procure what superficially passes for beads and pearl necklaces.

The Roman ladies had a special favor for pearls as ear rings, and it was one of their consuming ambition to possess exceptionally fine specimens for this purpose. They preferred the pear-shaped pearls, and often wore two or three of them strung together. They jingled gently as they moved about, fitting accompaniment, it may be said, to their graceful movements, and from this jingling they got their name, which was crotalia, or "rattles."

And the taste of the Roman ladies for pearls has perpetuated itself, though other of the ancient luxurious habits, which in their case accompanied it, having long died out. The women of Florence even now are not contented if they do not possess a necklet of pearls, and this generally forms the marriage portion of the middle class women. It is thought, just as it was in ancient Rome, that this gives an air of respectability, and forms a sure protection from insult in the streets and elsewhere.

"To be perfect," says a valuable work on gems, "a pearl must be of perfectly white color; it must be perfectly round or drop-shaped; it must be slightly transparent; it must be free from spots or blemish; and it must possess the lustre characteristic of the gem."

The second division in the Roman classification of pearls was "Margarites," which included pearls of any shape or color, large and misshapen often, but often, too, of exceptional purity and beauty.

Unlike most gems, the pearl comes to us fresh, pure, lustrous, direct from the hand of nature. Other precious stones undergo much careful labor at the hands of the lapidary, and sometimes owe much to his art. Diamond-cutting is indeed a branch of art, and cameo carving is a yet higher one. But the pearl owes nothing to man.

But pearls, despite all this, are not free from the fluctuations of fashion and caprice which assail all such commodities.

We have seen how for some years the fisheries have been affected by the craving for rose colored pearls among the ladies of Paris. And different people in this, as in so many other things, display varying tastes and tendencies. The Chinese prefer those of a yellow tint—a dark gold color—as one describes it. This tint is peculiar to certain classes of Oriental pearls. Those found in Panama, California and the South Pacific are more or less dark-looking.

Pearls are preeminently children of the light. Not only do they reflect it, but, like flowers, they lose their purity and delicacy of color if light is for any lengthened period withdrawn from them.

References to pearls by great writers, ancient and modern, are very plentiful, as the beauty and purity of the gem would lead one to expect.

The very associations inseparably linked with the name Margaret, which is only an adaptation from the Greek for pearl, might themselves be cited. We think of one named Margaret as pure, guileless, untouched by the faults of society and unspotted by its vices.

Grains of Gold.

To do so no more is the truest repentance.

Habit if not resisted soon becomes necessity.

Humility is the solid foundation of all the virtues.

The devil's friendship reaches to the prison door.

Hope is a leaf-joy which may be beaten out to a great extension, like gold.

We cannot think too highly of our nature nor too humbly of ourselves.

Without content, we shall find it almost as difficult to please others as ourselves.

There is a time when the truest courage is shown in retreating from temptation.

The bitterest tears shed over graves are for words left unsaid and deeds left undone.

When ill news comes too late to be serviceable to your neighbor, keep it to yourself.

We are all a kind of chameleons, taking our hue, the hue of our moral character, from those who are about us.

It is in vain to gather virtues without humility; for the Spirit of God delighteth to dwell in the hearts of the humble.

Are there no solitudes out of the cave and the desert? or cannot the heart in the midst of crowds feel frightfully alone?

Despair is like froward children, who, when you take away one of their playthings, throw the rest into the fire for madness.

Femininities.

A battle-ax of garnets, mounted in gold, is a modest brooch.

A meritorious match safe is designed in imitation of an Egyptian mummy.

"Get out o' here," said the hen to the china egg. "You don't belong to my set."

The number of husbands and wives who live apart is a sad commentary in these days.

The woman who has the fewest number of "confidential friends" is always the happiest.

In Lancaster, Pa., there is a woman who wears number fourteens, and has to buy men's boots.

Some Boston ladies have started a society for the cultivation of æsthetics among the masses.

An appropriate scarf-pin for the yachting ing season is a gold steering wheel studded with pearls.

A lover's knot of pearls, connecting two hearts of diamonds, is a handsome and stylish brooch.

To take out iron mold stains, wet with milk and cover with salt. The latter also rubs egg stains from spoons.

Very simple and attractive pen-wipers are of felt cut in the shape of an enormous pansy and painted in natural tints.

Rev. Mrs. Ellen Runkle, wife of a farmer who lives near Wooster, O., has been licensed to perform the marriage ceremony.

Mrs Mackay, of bonanza fame, who has dazzled Europe with her splendor, has a dress with $50,000 worth of real pearls on it.

The Queen of England seldom drinks more than one small glass of wine at dinner, and afterward takes a few drops of good old Scotch whisky.

Miss Laura White, who graduated in architecture at Michigan University, and was the first woman to complete that course, is now in full practice in Chicago.

A young lady named Baker, who died recently at her home near Freehold, N. J., left a goodly portion of her property to the gentleman to whom she was engaged to be married.

If there be much sickness about the neighborhood, boil the water which is used in babies' food, for boiling kills all the animalcula contained in the water. Cool it before using.

Horton Bailey, of Omaha, is suing for divorce, and one of his allegations is that his wife once hit him on the head with a picture frame in which was the motto, "God Bless Our Home."

Appropriate. Mrs. Naborder: "That's a very pretty motto you are working, Mrs. Browne-Hasah, 'Learn To Say No.' Is it for your son?" Mrs. Browne-Hasah. "No; it's for the dining-room!"

A Macon, Ga., woman finds pleasure in hunting snakes. She invariably picks them up with her naked hands. She is known in her locality as a "snake charmer," and has once or twice been bitten by the reptiles.

When a father in Madagascar gets the notion that his daughter ought to marry he puts a rope around her neck and leads her forth, and the first young man he offers her to has got to take her or pay a forfeit.

Boil one ounce of flax seed in a pint of water, strain it, add an ounce of rock candy, some honey and the juice of three lemons, boil again. Result—a nice old-fashioned cough medicine. Drink it as hot as you can bear it.

A young lady had given a rapid young man her photograph. He was enamored of it, and made the remark, "Some day, with your permission, I shall plead for the lovely original." She replied, "Then I shall give you the negative."

It is difficulties which give birth to miracles. It is not every calamity that is a curse, and early adversity is often a blessing. Perhaps Madame de Maintenon would never have mounted a throne had not her cradle been rocked in a prison.

W. D. Green, of Murfreesboro, Ark., has been awarded the prize of $25, and his wife a prize of $50. They are the heads of the "largest family in Arkansas." They have 13 children living, 72 living grandchildren, and 12 living great-grandchildren.

The late Queen mother of Bavaria has been well called the "Mother of Sorrows." She had little influence over her son, the late King Ludwig, but she always had hopes that the reason of her other son, Otto, the present mad monarch, would be restored.

The playing card pen wipers are easily made. Take three pieces of white felt the size of a playing cards, and out of black and red cloth cut out the spots which can be attached with gum; lay the cards on the plaited square of crimson cloth and finish with a bow of bright ribbon.

A young theological student, not far from Boston, recently invited a young lady to attend a concert. The damsel's answer was in this wise: "If you come as a temporary supply, I must decline the invitation. I am only hearing regular candidates." He didn't supply.

Not a day passes over the earth but men and women of no note do great deeds, speak great words, suffer noble sorrows. Of these obscure heroes, philosophers and martyrs the greater part will never be known till that hour when many that are great shall be small and the small great.

"I can't make out, dearest, why you married me," said a young bride during the honeymoon. "I'm not attractive and I'm a shocking housekeeper. I never even could use a broom properly." "That's just the reason, my dear," returned the husband, whose last wife could.

She was by the open window, and as her father came into the room she put her finger on her lips and bade him hush. Then, as the last notes of a lawn mower in the adjoining washing green died away, she turned with a look of rapture on her face. "Oh, papa," she said, "isn't Wagner's music simply exquisite!"

Masculinities.

Fifty years ago the daguerreotype was invented in France.

No man is sound who does not eat with relish his breakfast.

There is a reason for all things, and the small boy always wants to know it.

Man is a thinking being, whether he will or not; all he can do is to turn his thoughts the best way.

The first impulse of a boy with a new watch is to assure himself that none of its 175 parts are missing.

Ladies like men who are always round. Their husbands and brothers like men who are always square.

The Saturday afternoon holiday is no novelty; it was the rule in England in the 13th and 14th centuries.

At the first anniversary of the Washington Society, 50 years ago, 1,000 reformed drunkards marched in procession.

Some people's idea of a land of liberty is a land where a few persons have the liberty of depriving all others of theirs.

We acknowledge that we should not talk of our wives; but we seem not to know that we should talk still less of ourselves.

Don't make an (!) if you see a girl of the (.) bearing a huge parasol with a handle that looks like an (?); they're fashionable.

The good old gentleman who is 15 or 20 years behind the times usually has a son who is rapid enough to make the average about right.

In 1839 50 years ago, the first wheat was shipped from Chicago, amounting to 78 bushels. It was sent eastward by the lakes to Buffalo.

Two opinions. Mrs. Upton, passing millinery store. "Oh, my! What a dear little bonnet!" Mr. Upton: "H'm! That's just the trouble with it, Maria."

Consider morbid self-distrust as an intruder that has no business in your brain. Treat it as you would insects or vermin that infest your dwellings. Hunt it, crush it, give it no quarter.

On Sunday morning. Miss Travis: "Ah, Johnny! I have caught you with a fish-pole over your shoulder. I shall go and tell your father. Where is he?" Johnny: "Down at the foot of the garden diggin' the bait."

When a Frenchman enters a shop in Paris, if it be of modest proportions and he can see the shop-keeper or his wife, he doffs his hat and makes as polite a bow as if he had entered the presence of the President of the Republic.

Guest: "I wish I had come here a week ago." Hotel proprietor: "Ah, that's very flattering to my establishment!" Guest: "I don't know about that. What I mean is that I should have preferred to eat this fish then instead of now."

I consider it a mark of great prudence in a man to abstain from threats or any contemptuous expressions, for neither of these weaken the enemy; but threats make him more cautious, and the other excites his hatred and a desire to revenge himself.

For mosquito or gnat bites an experienced traveler writes that he uses a solution of alum water as strong as it can be made, adding one-fourth of aromatic vinegar and one-fifth of glycerine. Shake well before using. It will instantly cure the bite.

The Prince of Wales lives the life of a regular country gentleman at Sandringham, eating the huge breakfast of the Norfolk farmer, going in extensively for home comforts, looking after his farm and stock, and taking a keen interest in sport. He is not a bad landlord as landlords go.

Storekeeper: "Mr. Fogg, let me show you our new ash sifter. It is a wonderful labor-saving machine." Fogg: "No, thank you. If I should buy one, Mrs. Fogg would be getting me to sift the ashes on the ground that with your machine it is so easy that I could do it just as well as not."

A newly-married man was recently asked by his wife to order some yeast, and not having a very well defined idea of the article, he told the baker to send up two dollars' worth. At nine o'clock next morning three men might have been seen tugging a barrel of yeast up the front steps of that man's house.

I will be silent and barren of discourse when I chance to hear a tale, rather than go with child therewith, till another's care be my midwife, to deliver me of such a deformed monster. I may hear a tale of delight, and perhaps smile at an innocent jest; I will not jest nor joy at a tale disgracing an innocent person.

Fifty years ago the population of the United States was only 17,077,420. The census cost the Government $833,627. There were slaves in all the States except Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont and Michigan, Iowa had sixteen slaves; Wisconsin, eleven; Ohio, three; Indiana, nine; Illinois, 331. Total in all the States and Territories was 2,487,213.

One of the most senseless of social mistakes that people of positions not wholly assured can possibly make is to confess to being snubbed. In the heat of indignation against the person who has been guilty of snubbing them people are very apt to do the very thing which would be most pleasing to the one upon whom they wish to be avenged.

Merrily and wittily said Plutus, who was one of the merry wits of his time, "I would by my will have tale-bearers and tale-bearers punished,—the one hanging by the tongue, the other by the ears." Were his will a law in force with us, many a tattling gossip would have her vowels turned to mutes, and be justly tongue-tied, that desires to be tied by the teeth at your table.

A young man of Nantucket, becoming engaged recently, was desirous of presenting his intended with a ring appropriately inscribed, but, being at a loss what to have engraved upon it, he called upon his father for advice. "Well," said the old man, "put on 'When this you see, remember me.'" The young lady was much surprised a few days after at receiving a beautiful ring with this inscription, "When this you see, remember father."

Recent Book Issues.

"The Devil and I" is a novel in which the hero dubs the villian of the story by this title, and where the sensational elements carry matters with the highest kind of a hand. Published by G. W. Dillingham, New York. For sale by Lippincott.

"The Fall of Kilman Kon" is a novel whose every page gives proof of its being the work of a tyro with the pen. The plot has nothing whatever of originality, where it approaches the limits of the possible at all, and the characters fare no better. The scene is supposed to be laid in Paris and New York principally, but would be just as appropriate located anywhere. "The Fall" of the chief personage which titles the book is evidently brought about by love. It is printed and bound in better style than such matter deserves. Published by G. W. Dillingham, New York. For sale by Lippincott.

At a moment when the public ear is yet haunted by echoes of Centennial memories, anything relating to Washington and his friends has a more than usual interest. This is particularly the case when the occasion or object has great value in itself. Thus a new "Life of Lafayette, with a Critical Estimate of his Character and Public Acts" by Bayard Tuckerman, comes as a timely and valuable contribution to the literature of the day. Of it we may say that it puts in a comparatively brief compass a clear, full and exact account of the life of the great Frenchman. And not only is it of value for its evident fairness, thoroughness and reliability, but the author adds increased charm to the story by its pleasing method of narration. In two volumes, neatly bound. Published by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York. For sale by Porter & Coates.

Very little can be gained at this late day unnecessarily recalling the domestic troubles of prominent authors or others. It seems, however, there are some readers who take a special pleasure in such literary provender, and this class must be gratified. The married misery of Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, the famous English writer, and his wife have long been known, at least from the husband's point of view. But as an offset to him, here now comes a bulky book "Bulwer Lytton's Letters to his Wife" by Louise Devey, the executrix to Lady Lytton. They are unquestionably interesting as such records go, and make out, as is to be expected that the wife was more sinned against than sinner. It is, along with all its kind, another sad proof of the fact, that eminent ability is not exempt from shameful weakness or that wealth and station of themselves bring unalloyed happiness. Published by G. W. Dillingham, & Co., New York. For sale by Lippincott.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

Wide Awake for June presents an exceptionally interesting table of contents for its young readers, including contributions by Mary E. Wilkins, Elizabeth L Gould, Annie Sawyer Downs, Sara Trainer Smith, Clara Louis Burnham, Kate Putnam Osgood, Clinton Scollard, Margaret Sidney, Jessie Benton Fremont, Sally Joy White, Oscar Fay Adams, and other popular writers. The number is particularly attractive in its stories, which are many and excellent, while the illustrations, both humorous and serious, are up to the best standard of this admirable periodical in variety and artistic merit. Published by Messrs. D. Lathrop & Co., Boston.

AMUSING TOASTS.—A witty toast is sure of evoking applause and promoting jollity, and good after-dinner speakers are amongst the most popular of men. That these flashes of wit are not always unpremeditated is a fact that does not make them the less acceptable.

A rather cynical toast ran thus: "Woman, she requires no eulogy: she speaks for herself." A gallant young man, under the same festal circumstances, referred to one member of the sex he eulogised as "a delectable dear, so sweet that honey would blush in her presence and treacle stand appalled."

At the marriage breakfast of a deaf and dumb couple, one guest, in the speech of the evening, wished them "unspeakable bliss."

A writer of comedies was given a banquet in honor of his latest work, at which a jovial guest gave the toast, "The author's very good health! May he live to be as old as his jokes."

At another gathering were toasted, "The Bench and the Bar: If it were not for the bar, there would be little use for the bench."

As pithy was the following toast, proposed at a shoemaker's dinner, "May we have all the women in the country to shoe, and all the men to boot."

"IF I gave you a pound of metal and ordered you to make the most out of it, what kind of metal would you select?" asked a well known jeweler. "Gold, of course," was the prompt reply. "I'd prefer a pound of steel," said the jeweler, "and I'd have it made into hair-springs for watches. A pound of such springs would sell for an even $140,000.

I HAVE LONG KNOWN THE VIRTUES of Dr. Jayne's Expectorant, and frequently tested them on myself and family, when afflicted with Coughs and Colds. I believe it to be one of the best remedies ever discovered for these maladies.—Rev. Dr. DOWLING, formerly Pastor of Berean Baptist Church, New York.

QUEER APPLICATIONS.

A journalist, anxious to assist the State Treasury, recently proposed that a duty of one dollar should be put upon every letter addressed to the editor of a newspaper. Such a tax would have one of two effects: it would greatly reduce the unproductive work of an active editor, or would bring in a large revenue.

Magistrates are, after journalists, the public men to whom are made the most numerous and curious applications.

The other day a well-dressed person asked a police magistrate to advise him as to the course he should follow in order to get rid of one of two coffins that had been sent for the interment of a friend.

As executor, he ordered a coffin, which was delivered, and was immediately followed by a second coffin, sent at the instance of the dead man's brother, who refused to recognize the standing of the executor.

The writer was present in a court some time ago, when a gentleman of commanding and venerable appearance, was under examination.

A lady, dressed in black, with features of very refined cast, was listening with deep interest to the evidence. Presently she rose, bowed gracefully to the Bench, and said—

"May I ask who is speaking? Is it Dr. Guthrie or John Knox?"

The magistrate, who did not hear this strange request, invited the lady to resume her seat, with a promise that she should have an opportunity of asking the witness any question at the proper time. With another bow, the lady took her seat. At the close of the examination, his worship remarked—

"Now, madam, you may cross-examine the witness."

There were consternation and suppressed amusement on the faces of those who had heard her previous words. With another respectful bow, the lady answered—

"I have no wish to ask the witness any question, but I should like you, sir, to inform me who I am, where I am, and what I am, and where I have been swept up from."

Summonses are constantly applied for in circumstances in which ridicule outweighs every consideration of sympathy and even of commiseration.

An amusing case of this kind came before a magistrate, who was asked to give his sanction to proceedings against a person who had advertised that a donkey show would be held at the Agricultural Hall on the first of April! A crowd of connoisseurs assembled only to find the doors closed, and to become painfully conscious that if there was a donkey show, it certainly was not in the interior of the building.

It occasionally happens that such applications are not without their tragic elements. A gentleman recently applied for a summons against a medical man attached to a private lunatic asylum in which he had been for some time confined.

Among the allegations upon which the application was grounded were that his room was filled with chloroform vapor; that the chimney was blocked up and a fire lighted; that a Bible was placed before him with the passage marked, "He shall not die but live;" that he was fed upon pork, "to keep the lamp of life burning low;" that in his room was placed a rope with a black silk necktie; and that a staple was driven into a wall and covered with scarlet to make it conspicuous and to suggest suicide.

Most of the persons who prefer these strange requests go away without receiving much satisfaction from magistrates. The wisest course seems to be that of non-interference, for unusual requests when granted are not unfrequently followed by unusual consequences.

Had this policy of non-interference been adopted in a case that attracted considerable attention some months ago, a tragedy might have been prevented.

A man, of notoriously evil reputation, was awaiting his trial for murder. He applied to the magistrate to be permitted to retire with his wife to a room on the pretence of consulting his lawyer.

The magistrate granted this unusual application, and a few minutes later was startled by the report of a pistol shot. The prisoner had shot his wife and himself with a revolver supplied by his sister.

SQUIRREL SHOOTING.—The accompanying story needs no introduction, other than to say, as might be expected, that it comes from Georgia: There is an old gentleman in Forsyth county who is very fond of hunting.

Whenever he walks abroad his wife always accompanies him. Recently he went out to drive the cows. During his walk he discovered five squirrels up one tree and also discovered that he had lost all of his bullets but one.

He sat down, drew out his pencil and day book, and, carefully surveying the distance up to the first squirrel, began: If six grains of powder will move a bullet three inches, how many grains will it take to carry it up to the squirrel, a distance of about 30 feet?

He made the calculation, put in the required amount of powder, just enough to kill the squirrel and for the bullet not to pass through.

He banged away and down came the bushy tail. He took his knife, cut out the ball, loaded up and fired again and again until he killed all the five squirrels with the one bullet.

A bite of bread to a hungry man is worth more than a thousand words of condolence.

FOLKLORE OF PLANTS.

The oak was held in reverence by many ancient nations, such as the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans, and the old inhabitants of our own country.

It used to be said amongst the Greeks that it was the first tree ever created, and they showed their regard for it by the phrase, "I'll speak to the oak," used in affirming anything with particular solemnity.

The Druids worshipped the oak and performed many of their rites under the shadow of its branches. Whatever grew on the tree was thought by them to be a gift from Heaven, and more especially was this believed of the mistletoe.

"When you see a large hole in an oak,' says an old woman, an authority on folklore, "you may be sure that the tree is haunted."

In Germany the holes in the oak are believed to be pathways for elves. "These elves," we are told, "are little beings small enough to creep into acorns and hazel nuts, where they hide themselves, and where sometimes even

"Lying down they soundly sleep
As safe as in a castle."

Amongst northern nations the oak used to be considered under the protection of Thor, the hammer-wielding god. When Christianity brought in a new state of things, and the cross took the place of Thor's hammer, crosses used to be marked on oak trees.

They were thus, it was thought, withdrawn from the dominion of Thor and put under the care of Christian spirits, after which they were a safe refuge, not only for human beings, but for some tribes of the elfin world.

The oak used to be referred to by the superstitious for information regarding the future. The change of its leaves from their usual color gave more than one, says Evelyn, "fatal premonition of coming misfortune during the civil war."

From the gall or oak-apple, too, much valuable information was obtained. "In autumn (some say), in the gall or oak-apple, one of these three things will be found (if cut in pieces)—a fly, denoting want; a worm, plenty; but if a spider, mortality."

An old writer tells us: "If you take an oak-apple from an oak tree, and open the same, you shall find a small worm therein, which if it doth fly away it signifies wars; if it creep it betokens scarceness of corn; if it turns about, it foreshows the plague. This is the countryman's astrology which they have long observed for truth."

A good remedy for toothache was held to be to bore the tooth with a nail till it bled, and then drive the nail in an oak at a place where it would not be shone on by the sun, not saying a word all the time. The pain was held to cease when the nail rusted.

It was an old notion that lightning might strike but would never burn an oak. Another superstition mentioned by Bacon is that boughs of the oak put into the earth will put forth vines.

A curious tradition exists in Westphalia, giving the oak a place in the life of the Wandering Jew. It is said that that luckless vagabond can only rest where he finds two oaks growing in the form of a cross.

The custom perhaps, does not now survive, even in out-of-the-world corners of England, but at one time it was a common practice for people to wear in their hats the leaves of the oak on the 29th of May, the anniversary of the Restoration of Charles II.

Huge branches of oak were also cut down and dragged home, and the old towns and villages were made to look gay with long lines of green boughs projecting from every door and window. This was done to commemorate the wonderful escape of Charles II. from those who were in pursuit of him, who passed under the very oak tree in which he had hidden himself after the battle of Worcester.

The oak was adopted as their badge by the Stuarts, and the superstitious Highlanders used to say its not being an evergreen was an omen of the fate of the royal arms during the rebellion of '45.

The holly has an advantage over the oak in being clothed all the year round. A proverb defines an habitual story-teller as one who "lees never but when the holleu is green."

The name holly is said to be a corruption of holy, the monks of the olden time having been in the habit of calling the tree "the holy tree."

Everyone knows the conspicuous place taken by the holly amongst the evergreen decorations of Christmas. The custom of employing it and other plants in this way is one of considerable antiquity, and has been looked on as a survival of the usages of the Roman Saturnalia, which fell about the same time as Christmas. Or it may have taken its origin from an old Teutonic practice of hanging the interior of dwellings with evergreens, as a refuge for sylvan spirits against the frost and snow of winter.

A quaint old writer thus spiritualizes the use of holly at Christmas. "Our churches and houses," he says, "decked with bayes and rosemary, holly and ivy, and other plants which are always green, winter and summer, signify and put us in mind of His deity, that the child that now was born was God and man, who should spring up like a tender plant, should always be green and flourishing, and live for evermore."

In some parts it is thought unlucky to introduce holly into a house before Christmas Eve, and there is a saying that as the holly brought indoors at Christmas is smooth or rough, the wife or the husband will be master.

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RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

The most certain and safe Pain Remedy in the world that instantly stops the most excreciating pains. It is truly the great

CONQUERER OF PAIN

and has done more good than any known remedy.

FOR SPRAINS, BRUISES, BACKACHE, PAIN IN THE CHEST OR SIDES, HEADACHE, TOOTHACHE OR ANY OTHER EXTERNAL PAIN, a few applications rubbed on by the hand act like magic, causing the pain to instantly stop.

For COLDS, BRONCHITIS, PNEUMONIA, CONGESTIONS, INFLAMMATIONS, RHEUMATISM, NEURALGIA, LUMBAGO, SCIATICA, PAINS IN THE SMALL OF BACK, etc., more extended, longer continued and repeated applications are necessary to effect a cure.

ALL INTERNAL PAINS, PAINS IN BOWELS or STOMACH, CRAMPS, SPASMS, SOUR STOMACH, NAUSEA, VOMITING, HEARTBURN, NERVOUSNESS, SLEEPLESSNESS, SICK HEADACHE, DIARRHOEA, COLIC, FLATULENCY, FAINTING SPELLS are relieved instantly and quickly cured by taking internally a half to a teaspoonful of Ready Relief in half a tumbler of water.

WITH RADWAY'S PILLS THERE IS NO BETTER CURE OR PREVENTIVE OF FEVER AND AGUE.

Price 50c per bottle. Sold by druggists

RADWAY'S Sarsaparillian Resolvent.

FOR THE CURE OF **SCROFULA,**

And Other Constitutional Diseases.

Builds up the Broken Down Constitution, purifies the blood, restoring health and vigor.

Sold by druggists. $1.00 a bottle.

RADWAY'S PILLS

The Great Liver and Stomach Remedy.

STOMACH, LIVER, BOWELS, KIDNEYS, BLADDER, NERVOUS DISEASES, LOSS OF APPETITE, HEADACHE, CONSTIPATION, COSTIVENESS, INDIGESTION, BILIOUSNESS, FEVER, INFLAMMATION OF THE BOWELS, PILES, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely Vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals, or Deleterious Drugs.

PERFECT DIGESTION will be accomplished by taking RADWAY'S PILLS. By so doing

DYSPEPSIA,

SICK HEADACHE, FOUL STOMACH, BILIOUSNESS will be avoided, and the food that is eaten contributs its nourishing properties for the support of the natural waste of the body.

Price 25c per box. Sold by all druggists.

Send a letter stamp to DR. RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren Street, New York.

☞ Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.—Be sure and ask for RADWAY'S, and see that the name "RADWAY" is on what you buy.

Humorous.

HAPPINESS.

The summer's coming,
The bees are humming,
And the small boy hankers for early fruit;
The skies are bluer,
And gales are fewer,
And the damsel is trimming her bathing suit.

The weather fair is,
And warm the air is,
And the oriole in the orchard sings;
And hearts are lighter,
And life is brighter,
For house-cleaning's over again, by jings!

—U. N. Nonk.

A rash intruder—Measles.

A lady friend—A Quakeress.

Dreadfully cut up—Sausage.

Fighting the wind—Striking an attitude

A paper with plenty of "grit"—Sand paper.

The tenderest drum solos are those which have never been played.

A clock is very different from a man. When it strikes it keeps right on working.

Pugilists may not be philanthropists, yet they are all of the opinion that is better to give than to receive.

What was four weeks old in the time of Adam, and has never been older since, although still existing?—The moon.

A very interesting sight is to watch a minister try to open a car window. The dramatic effect comes from what he doesn't say.

Madeline: "George, you are not actually going to kiss me?" George: "By Jupiter, I am!" "Then I'll tell you one thing." "What is that?" "If you do, I'll retaliate."

Prison missionary: "What are you in for, friend?" Convict, sadly: "Just for missing a train." "Nonsense!" "No nonsense, sir. I missed a train for Montreal."

"Doctor, how do you find your patient to-day?" "Oh, Mr. Ransom is no worse." "Do you anticipate a fatal result?" "Mrs. Ransom, my medicine has never yet failed to do its work!"

Indulgent father: "Why, my dear, you had a party last month! How often do you wish to entertain your friends?" Daughter: "This one is not to entertain my friends, papa, but to snub my enemies."

"Where are you boarding now, old fellow?" "Livery stable." "What do you mean?" "Well, we have liver for breakfast and dinner six days out of the seven, and that's about the liverest table I know!"

Medical student: "Seems to me these cigars are not very good, if you will excuse me, old fellow." Friend: "No, they're not; but they are good enough to smoke out of doors." "Ah, I see! For external use only, eh?"

Jeweler: "The inscription you wish to have engraved on the inside of this ring, if I understand you, is 'Marcellus to Irene.'" Young man, with some embarrassment: "Yes, that's right; but—er—don't cut the 'Irene' deep."

"I don't say marriage is a failure," said Adam, candidly, as he sat down on a log just outside the Garden of Eden and looked hungrily at the fruit on the other side of the wall; "but if I had remained single this wouldn't have happened."

Exchange of confidences. Mr. Jinks: "I don't know how you will feel about it, sir, but the fact is that my wife, your daughter, is a dreadfully hard woman to live with." Mr. Binks: "I can sympathize with you sir; I married her mother."

A wretch convicted of having assassinated his own father and mother, when asked if he had anything to say before sentence of death should be pronounced upon him, piteously exclaimed: "I hope the court will have mercy on a poor orphan."

An Austin man went to a marble shop to order a tombstone for his brother, who had died. "Do you wish large or small letters upon the stone?" asked the man of marble. "Oh, large, by all means; my brother was very near-sighted," was the reply.

An experimenting resident of this place has perfected a remedy for diseased livers. It restores that organ to such complete health that when the person owning it dies, the liver has to be taken out and knocked on the head with something before it is fit to be buried.

Foreman: "You might as well look for another job, Jerry." Bricklayer: "What for? What have I done?" "Your trowelful of mortar struck the owner of the building down on the first floor." "Let him keep out. If the ball strikes 12 when I've got a trowel of mortar I don't care where it drops."

On a certain railway the following luminous direction was printed: "Hereafter, when trains in an opposite direction are approaching each other on separate lines, conductors and engineers will be required to bring their respective trains to a dead-halt before the point of meeting, and be careful not to proceed till each train has passed the other."

Miss Langham, reading an American paper: "What a strange country yours is, to be sure, Mr. de Yank!" Mr. de Yank, of Boston, "I don't think it much stranger than yours. But why?" "Well, this paper gives an account of a game of base ball, and it says that 'Chumpy saw a red-hot ball coming for him in centre field, but he promptly froze to it."

A popular preacher tells a good story as a hit at that kind of preachers who are too indolent to pursue the duties required of them by their faith. He says that one pious gentleman composed a very fervent prayer to the Almighty, wrote it out legibly, and affixed the manuscript to his bed-post. Then, on cold nights, he merely pointed to the document, and, with the words, "O Lord! those are my sentiments!" blew out the light and nestled amid the blankets.

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.—In Japan cattle are used as beasts of burden and for agricultural purposes more than ponies. When it is easier to reach their fields by water than by pathway, the little black bullock or cow is taken thither by boat. In the evening it is amusing to see one of these animals, on being unyoked from the plow, quietly walk straight down to the boat lying in the water at the foot of the valley. If its master is rather long in following, it is sure to look anxiously up the valley and low, as much as to say, "Are you not coming? I want to go home."

The plow used is most primitive and small, but quite sufficient for the purpose required, which is generally to turn over the wet muddy soil in the rice-fields. This instrument is carried down to the boat on the farmer's shoulders, who, on his arrival, holds the boat steady and tells the wise little animal to get in; but, until it has been ordered to do so, it never stirs. When once in the boat, the creature stands perfectly still, and is in this way sculled home, often a considerable distance. The understanding between man and beast is very clear, and very pleasant to see.

LESSONS OF HOME.—There are comparatively few who can receive the honors of a college, but all are graduates of the hearth. The learning of the university may fade from the recollection, its classic lore may moulder in the halls of memory; but the simple lessons of home, enamelled upon the heart of childhood, defy the rust of years and outlive the more mature but less vivid pictures of after-days.

So deep, so lasting are the impressions of early life that you often see a man in the imbecility of age holding fresh in his recollection the events of childhood, while all the wide space between that and the present hour is a barren and forgotten waste.

ONE day a sow belonging to a Chinese woman, Mrs. Feng, happened to knock down and slightly injure the front door of a Mrs. Wang. The latter at once proceeded to claim damages, which were refused, whereupon a fierce altercation ensued, which terminated in Mrs. Wang's threatening to take her own life. Mrs. Feng, upon hearing of this dreadful threat, resolved at once to take time by the forelock and steal a march upon her enemy by taking her own life, and thus turn the tables upon her. She accordingly threw herself in the canal.

"WHY do you wear such a mannish-looking cloak?" asked one fair damsel of another as they strolled down State street together this morning. "Well, you see," was the reply, "I ride on railway cars a great deal and like to have a seat all to myself. So I sit down and fling this cloak over the back of the seat beside me. Everyone thinks it is a coat belonging to some gentleman who will soon return from the smoking car and act as my escort. In consequence I am always comfortable without having to be impolite."

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FOR WIGS, INCHES.	TOUPEES AND SCALPS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.	No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.	No. 3. Over the crown of the head.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.	

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also **Dollard's Regenerative Cream**, to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER,
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov. 29, '88. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA.

I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract, or Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of nine years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidly thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best Wash I have ever used.

A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

To MRS. RICHARD DOLLARD, 1223 Chestnut st., Phila.

I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do not know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS,
Ex-Member of Congress, 8th District.

I have used constantly for more than twenty-five years, "Dollard's Herbanium," for removing dandruff and dressing my hair, also for the relief of nervous headaches. I have found it a delightful article for the toilet, and cheerfully testify to the virtues claimed for it. I would not be without it.

JAMES B. CHANDLER,
No. 308 Chestnut Street.

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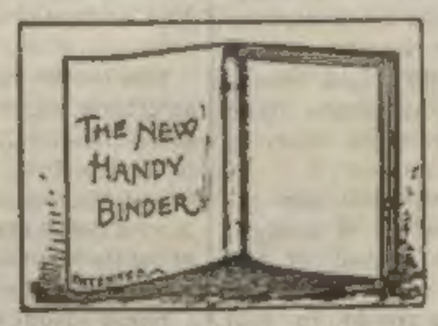

Very nearly, if not quite all of our readers, would like to preserve their copies of THE POST if it could be done easily, neatly and effectively. Its size makes it specially adapted for convenient and tasteful binding, so that by the proper means, it can be made a neat volume for future reference or preservation, and at the same time an attractive and pretty ornament for the centre table. This means of binding THE POST proposes to furnish in offering to its subscribers one of the "NEW HANDY BINDERS," now so popular, and which are unquestionably the most perfect and handsome articles of the kind ever produced.

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Latest Fashion Phases.

Flower bonnets, flower toques, and round hats with flower crowns are made for very dressy occasions; the flowers are large, and so few are used that they do not entirely conceal the prettily dressed hair underneath.

The brim may be covered with closely massed blossoms or buds, but is often of straw lace, of tulle puffs, or of velvet, which is always becoming next the face. As a flower bonnet contains two or three colors, it may be worn with various dresses—with green gowns because of the green leaves, with pink or blue to match the roses or myosotis blossoms, and with dresses of black net or white wool because all colors harmonize with these gowns.

Tailors have revived the Breton jacket once so popularly known, with its wide vest fastened under the left side of the jacket, and trimmed across the top and bottom instead of lengthwise.

The characteristic ornament for the jacket is then groups of buttons, four in number, set along the front edges with wide spaces between.

White-faced cloth broadly braided or corded at top and bottom is used for the vests of Breton jackets of the copper tints and other stylish red hues resembling crushed-strawberry and soft faded-rose colors.

The cording is in a wide vine stripe, and is done in silver cord, with also the silk and copper-colored cords. Silver buttons in slender long shapes are effective on such jackets. Green cloth jackets have lighter gray-green vests that are nearly white, drab cloth jackets have very light Suede or fawn vests, and dark gray cloths have either white or paler gray cloth heavily corded with silver.

Several gowns just completed are remarkable for their originality of design, and the care paid to each detail of the work.

A silver-gray plush was made in full pleats at the back and opened in front over a plain petticoat of gray satin marvellieux, delicately shot with flame-color.

A deep border of beautiful embroidery on shaded brocade edges the hem of the petticoat, and the same embroidered brocade is used to form the side pieces (which cross over a softly gathered vest of shot silk), and for a yoke, which is exquisitely buttonholed on to the rest of the bodice. The sleeves are plain gray plush, excepting for long points, which are let into the upper part.

A simple little gown looked extremely spring-like in a shade of daffodil yellow silk, draped beautifully; it was in Princess fashion and close-fitting, excepting for a few inches just in front, where it fell in straight folds from throat to hem; a deep band of smocking, carried out in silk to match, finished off the neck and sleeves.

Though not quite a tea gown, this would be a charming costume for a young hostess giving an afternoon entertainment of any kind.

Another dress, the colors of which will hardly read as if they blended harmoniously, nevertheless produced a not unpleasant effect. It was of muslin in a pale shade of leaf-green.

Two skirts exactly alike, and edged with a double row of knitting, are to be worn one over the other. The bodice somewhat resembles a Norfolk jacket, but is more loosely pleated.

Round the waist several large buttonholes are embroidered, and through these a deep violet ribbon is run, and tied in front, hanging in long ends to the hem.

The puffed sleeves are drawn into the arm by two bands placed above and below the elbow, and embroidered in a kind of Cluny pattern in violet silk.

The neck has a narrow yoke of the same embroidery, and the collar and cuffs are formed by ribbons running through buttonholes.

A teagown of fine white nainsook looked as if it might have been blown together—it was such a mass of tucks and lovely antique Valenciennes insertions, joined together by rows of large feather stitchings, carried out in thick white silk; long pointed draperies descended to the hem in front, edged with frills of lace; a wide sash of white moire ribbon, run in and out of lace insertions, was tied round the waist; lace sleeves were fastened to the wrist by narrow moire ribbon; white, long, hanging sleeves fell nearly to the ground, made of tucked nainsook and lace; large ruffles of lace finished the neck, and were continued down to the waist.

A petticoat, only a little less elaborate, is made to be worn with the gown, which would be a desirable addition to an Indian outfit.

Shot silks never look so well as when arranged in the long plain folds so much the fashion now, when their various lights and shades can be seen to their greatest advantage.

A particularly pretty example of this was to be seen—a Princess tea gown of pale blue shot with copper, having long hanging sleeves, on the insides of which were bands of pale blue silk, braided with silver braid in an Oriental pattern; the same kind of braided band borders the entire hem of the gown, and is continued up each side of the front, which opens over a narrow pleating of fine white lace; a fulling of lace drawn into a point from the back of the neck, and edged with a silver-braided band, produces the effect of a hood, and relieves the otherwise perfectly plain back.

The checked silk are large plaid patterns and mostly of a soft texture. All the richest make of silk would seem to be brocade. Tinsel on both black and white, as well as colors, is decidedly the fashion, and in the Damas brocade stripes and brocade are blended.

Marvellieux and armure grounds both appear in brocade, and many are of the most delicate coloring. For example, a ground of faint old-gold, on this an Eau de Nil brocade, outlined with a thread of terra-cotta round all the design. Black flowers are a marked feature.

Brocat Piedmontese shows the noble patterns with which antique Italian brocades have made us familiar, and they would bear comparison even as to texture. The colorings are all of a subdued art tone.

The looms have not for years produced anything richer, or, perhaps so rich, as some Charles X. brocades, with sweet peas in divers tints, all subdued, as if by time, on an elaborate interwoven groundwork. And a beige armure, with natural bunches of white hydrangeas, with green leaves, is veritable picture weaving.

Some bridal silk, showing huge alamanda blooms creeping through trellis work, take a yard to display the entire pattern, and a large leaf on a satin ground, with every shadow and vein showing, is a work of art.

There are also silks which are not by any means costly, such as "Venetian," with many varieties of stripes in different colors on one piece, and "taffetas Pekin," well suited to young girls' wear; and there are some handsome-looking silks, not really costly, with interwoven gold threads on most delicate colorings, intended for waistcoats.

Some rich makes of silk, plain in themselves, have a floral bordering at each selvedge, which, when sewn together, make an important stripe.

The artificial flowers of the year carry out the same idea as the floral designs in silk. They are faithful copies of nature, and are arranged as they grow.

They are used in great profusion, for the wide brims which appear on the fronts of some of the new hats demand many flowers such as moss roses and lilac, and some are covered with a flat wreath of leaves, thatched, as it were, the tips laying one over another.

Forget-me-nots look well, and the velvet flowers, many of them black, and many green, which are certainly not natural. Bouquets are worn also on the tops of hats and bonnets, and leafless flowers in a compact wreath, frame the face beneath the brims of both.

A new ribbon grass of a delicate green often takes the place of ribbon, and is used also to unite bouquets on ball gowns; it is pretty, and ties into bows.

Sprays of green wheat and tinsel are also worn with huge bunches of moss buds. Gueldar roses, anemones, peonies, and blowaways are favorite flowers.

Odds and Ends.

ONIONS.

One of the healthiest vegetables, if not the healthiest one, grown is the onion, yet, strange to say, but few people use it as liberally as they should. Boiled onions used frequently in a family of children will ward off many of the diseases to which the little ones are subject.

The principal objection to the promiscuous use of this vegetable is that the odor exhaled after eating is so offensive. A cup of strong coffee taken immediately after eating is claimed to be excellent in counteracting this effect. Although for a day or so after eating onions the breath may have a disagreeable odor, yet after this time it will be much sweeter than before.

For croup onion poultices are used with success, providing the child is kept out of drafts, and a sudden chill avoided.

The poultices are made by warming the onions in goose oil until soft, then putting them on the child's feet and chest as hot as they can be borne.

Unless in very obstinate cases, when taken in time, the croup readily yields to the onions. This, although an old-fashioned remedy, is a good one, as any mother who has brought up a family of children can attest.

Onions are excellent blood purifiers, and for eradicating boils or any of the blood humors are very efficacious. They are good for the complexion, and a friend who has a wonderfully clear, fine complexion attributes it to the liberal use of onions as a food.

People suffering from nervous troubles are much benefited by using these vegetables frequently, either cooked or raw. When troubled with a hard cough, if a raw onion is eaten the phlegm will loosen almost immediately, and can be removed with very little effort.

A raw onion is made much more palatable if when eating a little salt or pepper is used as a seasoning. Those troubled with wakefulness may insure a good night's sleep often if just before retiring they eat a raw onion.

There are few aches to which children are subject as hard to bear and as painful as earache. One of the best remedies we know is to take out the heart of an onion (a red onion is the best if it can be had, although lacking this kind, any other can be used) and roast it. When soft, so it can be handled without mushing, put it into the affected ear as hot as can be borne. Unless the cause is deeper than ordinary the pain will cease in a very short time and will not return.

A cough sirup in which onions form an important part is made by taking one cup of vinegar, one cup of molasses and one-half cup of cut up onions. Put on the stove and simmer about half an hour, or until the onions are soft. Then remove and strain. Take a teaspoonful of this frequently, when troubled with a cough, and unless very deep seated the cough will not last long.

Orange Cream Sponge Cake.—One and one-half cups of sugar, two cups of flour, one-half cup cold water, yolks of five eggs and whites of two, the rind and juice of one orange, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Bake in layers. Whip one cupful of thick cream to a stiff froth, and stir gradually into it half a cupful of powdered sugar; grate into it the yellow of one orange rind. Spread thickly between the layers of cake.

Soup a la Francaise.—Into a soup pot put a rump piece of beef, about eight pounds, a few beef bones, a knuckle of veal and three gallons of water and set to boil. Scum well, garnish with two whole carrots, two turnips, a small parsnip, some leeks and an onion with three cloves in it. Cover the soup pot and let boil slowly for three hours and then transfer the beef to a stewpan, the fat side uppermost, with one quart of strained broth from the surface of the pot, and keep till wanted. Add to the contents of the soup pot a little more water and let boil for another hour. Drain, pare and cut in pieces the carrots, parsnips, turnips and leeks. Put them in a soup tureen over some toasted, thin slices of French bread and a little chopped parsley. Skim off the fat, color slightly and strain three quarts of boiling broth over, cover and serve.

Fillet of Beef.—Pare off most of the fat and sinews from a tenderloin of beef; cover with slices of fat pork and let cook about fifty minutes in a bakepan, with sliced vegetables, parsley, celery and spices, one pint of white wine, and broth in equal parts. When this is done take off the slices of salt pork, baste the surface with melted condensed beef bouillon and glace of a bright color for ten minutes longer. Then take out the beef and put on a dish. Add a little more broth to the contents of the bakepan, also one-half jar of condensed bouillon; let the gravy boil, skim off all fat, strain and keep hot. Cut a few truffles and mushrooms and one-quarter of a red beef tongue in long, thin strips (Julienne like) mix with the sauce, pour around the fillet and serve. Potatoes cut Parisienne fashion and fried should be served with the fillet.

Clam Chowder.—Place half a pound of salt pork in three quarts of cold water. Let it boil; then chop four onions and eight potatoes and put in the same water. Open ten round clams, chop them fine and place in the stew. Take out the salt pork (which will now be soft enough to chop), chop and add again to the stew. If the pork is very salt no additional salt will be required. Cook until done, which will be in about one hour, adding more water if necessary. Just before serving pour boiling milk over four pilot crackers, and when soft add to the chowder.

Confidential Correspondents.

BEATRICE.—One of the best things for use in cleaning and washing the hair is a beaten up egg well rubbed in, and afterwards washed out with warm water. The hair does not require washing often.

ERNEST.—Any person, man or woman, a resident of the United States, of good character, health and average education, is eligible to appointment in the civil service of the Government of this country.

EDITH H.—"Adolescence" means in a growing state; this may last from youth up to manhood; childhood is simply the time in which persons are children; the other word means maturity; you should provide yourself with a dictionary.

HAMILTON.—There is no living animal called a "grimm." It is a fabulous one employed in heraldry. At the same time we think that its origin, or the ideal, was taken from the monsters of pre-historic times, or a combination of more than one.

TOM G.—It is the lady's place to make the first recognition to an acquaintance. As the lady in question merely danced with you at the corner during a set of lancers, and you were never introduced to her, neither was she your partner during the evening, you cannot possibly claim acquaintanceship.

MERRAN FLAUR.—The lines:

"Be wise with speed,
A fool at forty is a fool indeed—"

are from Young's "Love of Fame," Satire I., line 282. There is a line beginning in much the same way in the "Night Thoughts," Night I., line 30. Perhaps you have made a mistake.

L. M. B.—You must bring all your force of will to bear upon yourself, and abandon such fancies from your mind. You have nothing the matter with you as regards your bodily health, but your mind may become affected if you give way to such phantoms of the imagination. Occupy your attention by taking up some study for indoor amusement, and take part in all manly games and hard bodily exercise out of doors.

TONY.—It is an old proverb that "there is many a true word spoken in jest;" and it is equally true that many a stinging and embittering word is spoken in fun also. In fact, jesting is a dangerous business, and one into which no man should too freely enter, lest he becomes bankrupt in friendship. Your experience is a common one. All you can now do is to treat the lady with all possible politeness and kindness, and trust to time to heal the wound which you so unwittingly inflicted.

SAMUEL.—The Choregus was the Athenian citizen appointed to provide the various choruses that took part in the festive and religious celebrations. The Choregus who best discharged his duties received a tripod as a prize. He paid himself, however, the cost of the tripod, and also for erecting a chapel in which it was dedicated. One street in Athens was called the "Street of the Tripods," because it contained so many of these monuments; whence the name "Choragic monuments."

HANDEL.—"J," the seventh consonant in the English alphabet, is an addition to it of comparatively modern date; its immediately preceding letter "I" having formerly been used a substitute for it. As in the German language, it seems to have represented the letter "y" in some words. "I" and "J" were formerly identical in form, though not in sound, and we owe to the Dutch printers the advantage of a change to distinguish the two letters from one another. It is to be regretted that so many writers are careless about this distinction, and they confound both the capital I and T likewise, which creates a difficulty for the reader.

STOVE.—We do not see exactly how we can aid you in the matter. You had better trust time, industry, and perseverance in your profession to increase your means. By that time you may have your furniture and such incidentals all paid for, and have learned to husband your resources. When arrived at that stage you may marry the lady—if she will have you. We do not think it would be considered bigamy for you to husband your resources and the young lady at the same time. Meanwhile there would be no harm done in telling her of your affection, particularly if you will be honest enough to tell her the true state of the case before forming an engagement.

BOB.—Your sisters are taking the best possible way to make an old maid of you; for all girls of your sort have a kind of maidenly repulsion which impels them to reject a man who is thrust upon them. We are so used to reading between the lines that we see you care a great deal for the man who is so generous and attentive; yet your combative instincts cause you to keep him at a distance merely because you are pressed to accept him. Pay no attention to sisters or any one else; exercise your own judgment, and do not turn away a gentleman who is quite ready to forgive your little caprices. There are many happy old maids, but the most wretched creature on the face of the earth is that old maid who holds the memory of having wantonly rejected a devoted suitor. She becomes cankered, mournful, and generally a little inclined to a virulent sort of melancholia. Take care that such a fate does not become yours; if the mishap really befalls you, you will wish that you had never seen the light of day.

ELAINE C.—Tastes vary. Most persons would not mind letting a pet dog lick their hand, though that is not always a wise thing to allow; but they would certainly draw the line at letting a dog lick their face. All pampered animals will attempt such little endearments, and some of the hardest of sporting dogs will imitate the pampered ones; but it is best to forbid any animal of the sort to become aggressively affectionate. If a good dog is carefully fed, he does no harm by licking the skin of a sound hand, and he will actually cause tiny sores to heal simply because his tongue acts as a sort of antiseptic; but the same cannot be said of the cat. Of course, if any one enjoys the rasping of the little hooks on the feline creature's tongue, we congratulate him; but we must tell him that he runs some risk. You ask, "Is a scratch from a cat dangerous?" We answer, "Yes—very dangerous indeed; and the bite is worse." Children whose blood is pure may suffer no harm from a cat's scratch; but there is always some danger in the case of full-blooded adults. During this year there have been two cases of hydrophobia from cat-bite; and, though such cases are rare, we incline to make them rarer. Keep pets at a distance.